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ERRANT THOUGHTS.

BY J. I.

We women sit at home and sew, all quietly in seeming,
None know how far away the thoughts may fly,
Nor that of some far-distant one we're dreaming,
The while our work we scan with busy eye.

The fair young girl, o'er dainty trifle bending,
Seems to have given it her anxious thought,
But fancy bright to other scenes is wending,
And with the stitches tender looks are wrought.

A manly voice still in her memory lingers,
And loving words are sounding in her ear,
He holds in pressure from the little fingers,
And sweetest thoughts she stitches in just here.

A mother, youthful still, and freshly blooming,
Her needle gabbles with ever thoughtful care,
A garment for the babe whose recent coming,
Gives her the look that only mothers wear.

She weaves in thoughts of babe with her sewing,
And smiles, as in her fancy of his fate,
She sees him to a noble manhood growing,
And numbered with the honored and the great.

No matter what the garment we are making,
Our thoughts are bust as the busy hand,
One moment gay, then sadder fancies waking,
We sew in tears with gusset, seam, and band.

And though we sew at home, all quietly in seeming,
How far and fast our errant fancies fly,
Our work is woven in with checkered dreaming,
Of saddened past, or hopeful "by-and-bye."

The Lights of Rockby.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE LOVE OF LANCKLER," "LOVE'S DEVOTION," "FOR MONEY'S SAKE," "STRANGERS STILL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"WE shall miss you sadly, Lottie; you take all the fun with you; we shall never dare to be merry again; we are in too much awe of the Great Western."

The speaker, a pale slim girl, surrounded by a group of other girls resembling her as to pallor and gloomy looks, flung her arm in girlish gushing fashion round the neck of a tall, brown-faced girl of merry, fearless expression. She returned the caress lightly, saying—

"I too am sorry, girls, to leave you, at the same time, am glad to slip out of the clutches of the Great Western. There, there, pets, dry your eyes, do not give her the satisfaction of seeing that you are miserable."

A huge bony woman of severe sombre aspect entered the room saying—

"The cab is waiting, Miss Lottiemere; I trust that you have taken leave of your friends."

Lottie replied that she had, though her eyes lingered lingered sorrowfully upon the dependent little group by the iron-barred window.

"Good-bye, Miss Western, and for the love of God try to be more tender with those motherless girls; remember, life and gaiety are as natural to the young as light to heaven."

The tall, gaunt woman said, severely—

"Miss Lottiemere, your frivolity will lead to a bad end. I am grateful to think your levity of deportment will now be removed from all fear of its contaminating the young souls committed to my charge."

Lottie smiled back at the girls as she passed the sombre form of the school-mistress, with a defiant little shrug.

A moment later, with tears in her dark eyes, she was waving her handkerchief out of the cab window, glad and sorrowful together at parting from her school friends, the only ones she possessed, for she was a lonely orphan, now going far down to the coast of Cornwall to her uncle and guardian whom she had never seen, and whose curt cold letter gave her an unpleasant idea of him.

And though she had a dauntless spirit ever willing to look on the bright side of life and made the best of the bad, she was bound to confess to feeling lonely, and a little frightened at the long journey before her; but she consoled herself with the knowledge that it would soon be ended.

She was alone in the train, and being tired out fell asleep, and dreamt she saw on a high cliff three red lights like a cluster of rubies, shining out over a storm-tossed sea where a vessel labored like a living thing for life; all at once the ruby lights went out and there was an awful gloom upon the sea, and, out of the darkness, piercing the rocks like the last trumpet, rang out an awful cry as to lost souls in their death-agony; then all at once the darkness was silvered over with moonbeams, and the shimmering sea rocked, like an own babe, a single soul upon its bosom, just where the ship went down.

Lottie awoke with a start, to hear a rough voice saying, in a strange accent—

"Anyone here for Rockby?"

"Oh, yes!" panted she, hastily, snatching up her belongings, as she sprang out on to the narrow, ill-lighted platform.

A young man stepped out of the shadow, asking—

"Am I addressing Miss Lottiemere?"

Lottie turned to the huge figure with relief, answering—

"Yes, I am she. Did my uncle send you to meet me?"

"Yes," he answered, curtly; "so please come along. I'll see about your box; but the mare is restive. We have had to wait; the train is behind time."

Lottie followed the tall form as swiftly as her cramped limbs would allow her, thinking, as she stumbled on in the gloom, that this big fellow might have been a little more polite with advantage to both. Lottie was gifted with some spirit, so this curtness on the part of her escort rather roused than depressed her.

When he had assisted her to mount to the front of the high dog-cart, he left her to see about her box; but she saw him stop awhile on his return to speak to a rough-looking man, dressed like a fisherman, and, as he sprang up beside her, he shouted back to the man—

"Without fail!"

"Aye, aye, Master Prince, the old motto."

As they drove away at a rattling pace, Lottie wondered what the motto was, from the simple fact that she had nothing else to wonder about just then.

As the moon lit up the rugged face beside her, she turned to wondering who he was, called "Prince." Not for his noble looks, she decided.

They drove in silence up a steep hill, then along a road by a cliff.

It was a grand, wild scene in the calm moonlight.

The sea looked like a slumbering lion, who might wake to fury and destruction at any moment, although its huge paw lay so passive on the shore, upon which its heavy mane curled so quietly about the front of the frowning, rocky cliffs.

Down below on the beach, in the shelter of a bay, a crowd of black-plumed birds hovered over their prey.

Lottie did not know why the sight of those birds made her shiver, but they did, and so markedly that the young man beside her noticed it, and asked—

"Are you cold, cousin?"

Lottie lifted her dark eyes to his, as she answered—

"Indeed, no; only this is such a ghastly scene, like a phantom sea, with a dead shore; and down there the shrunken carcasses of ships. What are they?"

"What, the boats?" said the young man; "why, fishing-smacks. Did you not know that Rockby was famous for its fisheries? You must see Rockby in the sunlight before you pass judgment on it."

"Yes, of course it looks different then," answered Lottie.

"For myself," continued the young man, "I think it a fine, free-looking place, just what a painter would call 'grand.' It reminds me of a picture I once saw; it was painted by an old master, and called 'The Mill,' a scene on the Rhine. Look ahead, cousin, and you can see the 'Crown of Rockby,' as our old place is called."

Lottie's gaze followed his pointed hand, and saw, built upon the summit of one of the highest cliffs, a low, round building, fashioned like a crown, and sitting regally on the rocks, its windows flashing out like gems in the moonlight; and beyond it, further along the rugged cliff line, flashed out the large red lights.

Lottie started at sight of them, for she had seen them before in her dream. She asked sharply—

"What is the meaning of those three red lights?"

"They are danger signals to the coast," answered Prince. "You see, cousin, there are some cruel rocks below them; it is the very centre of danger. Down there, where the sea washes over the surface of those pointed rocks, many a good ship has been broken into fragments; they are called the 'Devil's Teeth.' Were these lights not there we should never be without wrecks; as it is there are a great many."

"What a wonderful pile of buildings," said Lottie looking again at the Crown.

"Yes," answered Prince, with some pride; "seen from the sea they have a quaint effect; they are very old and, tradition tells us, have made a rest for the Virgin Queen, Drake, and other grand old folk whom history points to as heroes. Now we shall soon be home. Cheerily, Nell! good lass, good lass," he continued, as he coaxed the mare over the loose stones up to the back of the house; which was enclosed by a broad stone wall.

The house seen from the road, was noticeable for its massive strength.

It was low, flat, and completely round, with turrets rising in elegant designs breaking the skyline.

A tall, uncouth-looking man, of middle age, held the mare as Prince handed Lottie out, saying, as he stood in the stone porch—

"Welcome to Rockby, cousin."

Beneath her feet staring out like letters of fire, was the motto of the house, in old English letters made of brass, and let into the granite step—

"Fear not, fail not."

Something of the spirit of the legend entered Lottie's heart as she entered the large hall, where old armor and rusty fire-arms were lit up faintly by a feeble lamp.

Lottie stood silent in the grim hall, waiting till her cousin lead her further into the house.

She looked a lonely and desolate figure standing in the faint light, and felt as lonely, strange and desolate as she looked.

The young fellow, entering the hall, was perhaps struck with a perception of the girl's friendliness, for his voice was kind as he bade her follow him, and they entered a large, low room, dimly lighted and terribly bare of furniture.

A large screen shut off half the room.

Following her guide behind the screen, she came upon quite a different scene. A man of mild looks sat before a cheerful fire his feet buried deep in a soft rug; the chair he sat in was of velvet and tarnished gold, and had a look of state.

Beside him stood a table covered with a dainty repast.

The whole scene, and his aged vacant face was lighted by a well-trimed lamp.

He looked up as Lottie approached, and, holding out his long thin hand to her, said, in the small shrill voice like an echo—

"I am glad to welcome my sister's child to the old home; what is your name?"

"Charlotte."

"Ah! that was the name of your mother. Come sit down, child, and refresh yourself; you have travelled a long way to-day and must need it. Prince, take her to her room first; Maggie is busy. We are but poor people, my child and keep but few domestics."

Lottie smiled and said "she has not been taught to consider herself a fine lady."

In the large bedchamber, with its grand but faded tapestry, frowning pictures, and hearse-like bed, Lottie walked straight up to the window and, drawing aside the heavy curtains, looked out upon the broad unbroken expanse of open sea; it seemed to her that she was on board ship.

By straining her neck she could just manage to see the red lights which overhung the cliff like unblinking eyes.

Taking off her wraps she quickly descended the broad staircase again, and trod with light steps across the expanse of polished floor, passed in behind the screen, and stood before the fire with her bright face and slender graceful figure showing to advantage against the dingy tapestry.

Her cousin, who stood by the fire handed her a stiff high-backed chair, and her uncle asked her choice of food.

Then her healthy young appetite asserted itself, and she enjoyed a good meal; after which she knelt down in childlike fashion on the rug opposite the log fire, and turned her little blue hands to the blaze. Prince struck a hand-bell sharply, and the man who had held the mare removed the remains of the repast with the dumb stolidity of a new-made mute.

"Do you mind smoke cousin?" asked Prince.

"Really, I don't know," said Lottie, smiling brightly; "I don't remember ever to have been where people smoke, but I dare say I should like it; just try me."

Prince smiled as he produced a briar-root pipe and, after loading it, lighted up, feeling those dark eyes watching him with interest when the great clouds of smoke floated round his head.

He looked down on her and smiled—a smile which lighted his face with momentary brightness, and marvellously altered his morose expression.

He was a tall sturdy fellow, about twenty years of age, possessing a splendid physique and a shrewd, plain face.

After he had smoked in silence some little time, and drunk two glasses of toddy, he picked his hat up from the floor where he had thrown it, and said—

"Good-night, cousin; good-night, sir."

"Are you going out to-night, Prince? Cannot you spare this one evening to your home?"

"Sir, I have promised."

"Very well, lad, very well; your cousin must excuse a previous appointment."

The old man looked sad and worried as he spoke, and Lottie, vexed with her cousin as the cause, said saucily—

"Oh! we shall do very well without him, uncle;" which they certainly did.

After they had been alone a little while Mr. Rockby asked—

"Was it a nice night, Lottie?"

"Yes, sir, delicious; such moon and stars, they seemed to hang down right away from the heavens."

"Ah! I know," said the old man; "they looked like what they are, worlds perhaps more wonderful than ours. Is it not a soul-subduing thought, my child, to picture those other worlds and their inhabitants; for it is placed beyond doubt that some of those planets are peopled? Come with me Lottie, and look upon the wonders of the heavens."

As he spoke the old man rose with nervous haste, and, drawing aside a heavy

curtain, which Lottie supposed had hidden a window, showed her a place fitted up as an observatory, through which costly telescopes gave one a glimpse of the wonders of the heavens.

Lottie was very much impressed by the old man's eloquence of description of the various wonders the telescope unfolded to her view.

So the evening passed very pleasantly to both, and Lottie retired to bed, wondering where her cousin could go to, and why there was such a gloom upon his father's face.

When she was in bed she was surprised to find that by merely lifting her head she could look upon the red lights of Rockby.

With prayers for those in peril from the sea, she fell asleep.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Lottie awoke she found, as Prince had said that the scenery was transfigured by the sunlight from gloom to brightness.

Throwing on a hat, she descended, and slipped out of an open door on to the breezy cliff for a walk.

The wind unbound her dark tresses and tossed them into curls; brought a pretty pink to her soft cheeks, and a dancing light to her eyes.

Returning to breakfast she met her cousin strolling along the shore, with a girl about his own age but wonderfully lovely.

Lottie thought she had never seen so fair a face before; the peach-bloom of the skin was endowed with a rich tint, and the fleecy flaxen hair somewhat bleached by the sun; the blue eyes, ripe red lips, and splendid form, attracted all beholders.

The girl was talking in a raised tone, and it seemed to Lottie that she was scolding Prince, for he appeared to be coaxing her.

With womanly quickness, Lottie noticed that the girl's dress was coarse and common, if not really vulgar; instinct told her she was not a lady.

As Lottie passed them her cousin's face flushed crimson, and lifting his hat to the girl, left her and accompanied Lottie home.

During the walk he was very silent, so Lottie made talk for both.

The breakfast passed off in silence, for Prince seemed sulky, and Mr. Rockby took his breakfast in his own room.

After it was over, Lottie left her cousin, and repaired to her own room to unpack.

It was a pleasant, airy room by day, and as she leant out of the window, a sea-gull flapped its white wings almost in her face.

Lottie decided that she might be quite happy here after a while.

Just as she arrived at this conclusion a young woman entered the room, evidently a servant; she had a happy, wholesome look, by the cheerful way in which she hurried about her work, and seemed of a contented disposition.

From her Lottie learnt the ways of the household, the pleasantest walks, the best church, and several other details acceptable to her.

After which, she roamed about the old house, and discovered that only one wing of it was not used.

The other portions were full of quaint, mysterious passages, and rooms full of fine old furniture gone to decay.

There was a picture-gallery, too, a long well-lighted place, full of fine old portraits by eminent artists of centuries gone by.

She was charmed to find that many of the ladies had the same cast of face as her own; somehow she felt pleased to belong to those dead and gone relations.

She stood long before a portrait of a man, painted at the time of the commonwealth; the painting strangely reminded her of her cousin Prince, whom it very much resembled.

It had the same look of sullen strength and dark reserve; she wondered whether this man's face had ever softened, as her cousin's did when he smiled.

She stood thus looking up, her hands crossed behind her, whilst the sun cast a halo about her, when Prince came up to her, saying—

"Would you like to go on the sea this morning, cousin? If you would come with me."

Lottie expressed her pleasure at the proposal, and ran off to get her hat.

On her return she found her cousin waiting at the open door, smoking, and looking as idle as though he did not intend to move all day.

Lottie waited by his side a few moments, then her impatient little foot patted the ground petulantly at the delay.

As her cousin still silently smoked, she said, with some suspicion of temper in her tone—

"Come, cousin, I am ready."

Prince's eyelids quivered a second, then he opened them slowly, and looked as though he was just then made aware of her presence.

Without a word, he strode on towards the cliff, allowing her to follow.

"Pretty cool!" she thought; "but I suppose he considers that he can treat a girl leaving school as a child."

She forgot her vexation, however, when she stood on the golden sands, ready to be handed into the pretty little pleasure-boat, called "The Fairy Fin."

How delicious it seemed to the London school-girl, to sit and be softly wafted over the rippling sea; her little bare hand paddling against the tide, and Prince's fine full voice filling her soul with harmony as he softly sang.

He seemed to have totally forgotten the presence of the quiet girl opposite to him.

Somehow Lottie fancied that his heart was with his flaxen-haired companion of the morning by the soft light on his beautiful face.

He rowed her far out to sea, where from a long distance they could see the Crown of Rockby, a fair sight in the summer sunlight; then Prince seemed to wake up to the fact that he was not alone, and he pointed out to Lottie the various places of interest about there; then he asked her "if she was strong, and if she would like to learn to row?"

Delighted with the notion, Lottie was all haste to commence.

In the mirth which followed the first lesson Prince forgot his day-dreams, and Lottie her loneliness; so, in this fashion, weeks, aye, even months passed, and Lottie did not seem any nearer knowing her relatives than the first night she came to Rockby; still she was happy among the books, pictures, quaint old rooms, and lovely breezy walks; she was growing fond of her uncle too, though they did seem such strangers.

She brightened his gloomy life for him by many little gentle attentions which sprang from the very centre of her empty little life.

She could see that father and son were not the best of friends; she often heard them using high words; it always seemed to be about certain low associations which the young man had formed, and which his father warned him against, sometimes gently and pleadingly, at others with quiet contempt and scorn, which stung quicker than violent anger.

Lottie grieved over the breach between them, but she prayed her pure little prayer for peace upon that gloomy home, and hoped for happier days for those two who loved yet misunderstood each other.

She often met her cousin with his flaxen-haired beauty, and still more often saw him among a group of rough-faced men.

She often wondered why he went out so often with the fishermen, but imagined it was for mere sport; true, she sometimes marvelled how it was that the wine, spirits, and tobacco were so plentiful in a house otherwise almost poverty-stricken.

Once the cherry-cheeked servant startled her by saying, that "Rockby was famous for its smugglers as well as its fisheries and its awful wrecks."

She hinted, too, that the coastguard were making a stir just now, as there had been some suspicion of wrecking going on.

Somehow a chill struck down into Lottie's heart at this intelligence; she did not know why, but she confessed to herself that she felt sad and frightened, and her dream in the train stood out distinctly before her like a warning.

The weather at this time was fearfully stormy, and many reports of sad disasters came to the Crown of Rockby; reports which struck the old man like palsy, and caused a look of gloom to settle upon the son's sombre face.

Lottie began to feel very miserable; she could not shut out the sound of the frequent disputes between her cousin and her uncle.

Prince was rarely at home, and when he was he seldom noticed his father's ward.

Sometimes Lottie met the girl whom she had seen with her cousin, with a young coast-guardsman, a handsome, pleasant-looking lad who seemed devoted to the girl.

Lottie had discovered that the girl was the daughter of a boat-builder, living down on the coast, a man who bore an ill name, and looked as though he deserved it.

Lottie noticed that her cousin seemed more often with the man than with any other; they went deep-sea fishing together, and seemed to be great allies in all manner of sport.

She often heard the man's name mentioned in the miserable family quarrels which disturbed the peace of the dear old home.

She had heard her uncle say "this Steve Katsby would be the ruin of Prince. She wondered why.

Her uncle was a great invalid, and never left the house, except when he crawled out into the neglected wind-wrecked garden to snatch a breath of sea air and busk in the morning sun.

One afternoon, a glorious sunset tempted Lottie to leave the window-seat where she had been reading a volume of poems, and quit the gloom of the silent house for a refreshing walk on the cliffs, crimsoned now by the last flush of the sun.

As she neared the sort of signal-box which supported the danger-signal she paused with horror, for, struggling on the brow of the highest cliff, from which a sheer descent led to the sea, were two men locked in a deadly embrace, struggling with evil, passion-distorted faces.

The awful nature of their dangerous position for a moment paralyzed Lottie; then, with a long deep breath, she ran up the steep incline to the spot, crying out in a shrill, agonized voice—

"Stop! for God's sake, or one of you will be a murderer."

As Lottie drew near she saw it was her cousin Prince and the handsome coast-guardsman; the thought of the poor old father flashed across her mind, as with sudden decision she threw herself upon the struggling men, saying—

"Prince! for God's sake, what would you do?"

For he had gained a momentary mastery and was pressing the other towards the edge of the cliff with such an evil look upon his face that surprise caused him to relax his hold on his antagonist for just one second—time enough for the other to free himself.

They stood apart with wicked revengeful looks, while Lottie placed herself between them with hot indignant words condemning their brutal rage.

Prince stormed at her fiercely for her interference, using such strong language that Lottie's temper was stirred, and retorted sting for sting.

The young coast-guardsman stood by arranging his distorted dress, with white set face, showing that the quarrel was not ended on his part.

Prince picked up his crushed hat, and, thrusting his fist into it spitefully, planted it on head, and strode off at a furious pace, while the coast-guardsman, quickly recovering his good temper as his foe disappeared said with some attempt at apology—

"I am sorry you were witness to this quarrel, but I assure you I had reasonable cause for the temper which I displayed."

"What could make you two have such a bitter enmity towards each other?"

"What, indeed!" said the young fellow, "unless it was a lovely woman. Don't you know that Byron, or some other clever man, tells us 'There is never a row but a woman is at the bottom of it?'"

From this it struck Lottie that they had been quarrelling about Rhode Katsby; she had heard that the girl was a great flirt and had heard also many other things to her discredit.

Lottie allowed the young coast-guardsman to see her to the door, and smiled when he expressed a hope to see her again.

During the walk home she discovered that his name was Fred Talents, and that he lived alone in lodgings, as his friends resided in London.

Thinking of all these things, and marvelling by what subtle charm such women bewitched so many men, Lottie stood by the iron gate watching with absent musing the tall form of the young coastguard as he disappeared beyond the cliff line; then, with a sigh, she turned to enter the house.

At this moment her cousin opened the door, and catching her hand in his, angrily, exclaimed in a tone of concentrated passion—

"How dared you allow that puppy to come to this house? How dare you encourage his spying about here? I say, how dare you?"

Lottie lifted her stormy eyes to his scornfully as she struck the hand which held her with all her force.

"How dare I, indeed! Let me tell you Mr. Bully, there is little I would not dare to assert my independence. Instead of snarling at me like an ill-tempered hound, you should thank me for shielding your soul from the stain of bloodshed. I tell you it was ill done and cowardly to press your advantage over your antagonist, as you did, upon the very brow of the cliff!"

"Nonsense, girl, we were well matched, it was a fair fight, he might have done the same by me; the mere chances of war."

"Well-matched were you? I am right glad to hear it. I hope that young fellow may give you a fair thrashing yet, so that you may have a clearer opinion of your merits," said Lottie, in the full heat of her hot temper; but she shrank before the black look which answered her, as her cousin said—

"Silence! And understand, once for all, I will not be brow-beaten by a silly girl."

"Nor I," she answered, hotly, "by a peevish love-sick boy."

For a moment her audacity kept him silent.

Then with a sardonic laugh he allowed her to pass, remarking, "he guessed they had met a tartar."

He would have changed his mind, perhaps, had he seen her ten minutes later, sobbing in her great bare bed-chamber above.

"Master's compliments, miss, and will you come to tea?" said a servant, looking in an hour later and finding Lottie asleep, seated on the floor with her humbled head and tear-stained face resting on her arms, which were thrown upon the broad window-sill in an attitude of intense dejection.

"I had no idea it was so late; tell my uncle I will be with him directly," answered Lottie, rising swiftly to her feet, and, running to the table, she hastily gathered all her loosened tresses in her hand, and prepared to smooth them, but they were as stubborn as her own sweet self, so with an impatient excitement she tied them together with a crimson ribbon, and allowed them to fall in a few thick curls to her slender waist; then, bathing her flushed face, and fixing a crimson knot at her throat, she slid, a vision of youth, down the darkening staircase.

She passed her cousin on the broad landing, and he started at the bright picture, and turned and watched her graceful form glide through the waning shadows.

She, happening to look up, caught her eyes and relieved her feelings by making a mouse at him.

She looked so chic, saucy, and child-like as she did this, that Prince's dark face relaxed into a grim smile.

"After all," he thought, "she is but a child; it would be foolish to feel angry with her."

And somehow the lonely little figure got fixed in his mind in quite a new light, with a little halo of interest about it; so, when they met again he took the little hand, which was frankly extended to him, and answered quite civilly for him, when, with a pretty contrite air she told him that she did not mean half the cross things she had said to him, and hoped that he was not fearfully offended.

The same interest hovered about her in his eyes as she handed his father his tea with a pleasant word and smile, and as, with a few dexterous touches, she beautified the formal-looking table.

After the meal was ended Prince, as usual, filled his pipe, and his father drew one of the ponderous brown folios towards him, and prepared to read, while Lottie pulled some womanish work out of her pocket, and was soon demurely counting the stitches as though she did not know that Prince was watching her.

CHAPTER III.

ARE you a musician, child?" asked Mr. Rockby, lifting his eyes to the fresh young face which smiled upon him over the steaming cup of coffee she had enriched with a well-whisked egg.

"I fancy I understand music as well as most, uncle, and I am sure I love it more than many."

"Ah! then you must need some instrument. We must think about it."

"Think about what?" said Prince, coming in and casting his cap as usual on the floor, as he seated himself at the table. "It strikes me, sir, you are always thinking."

Prince was looking fresh and brown as a newly cast-up seaweed, with the breath of the sea lingering about him.

His father repeated the substance of their conversation, and after despatching two huge slices of toast and a couple of eggs, Prince paused and said, in a softened tone—

"Are there not some musical instruments in my mother's room, sir?"

"Of course there are, my boy; you must take your cousin there presently. Now tell me, what fortune had you on the sea last night? Did you wrench many treasures from it?"

"Indeed we did, sir; just at the last we had one splendid haul and caught a complete school of mackerel between us, and here are a few you see cooked to perfection."

A load seemed suddenly lifted from Lottie's heart; she knew now where he had passed the night, and why his father's brow had darkened at his going. It was natural that he should be anxious; was not this his only son?

After the meal was ended, Prince lighted his pipe as usual, and then, looking at his father instead of her, said—

"Well, cousin, shall we hunt up the music now?"

"Oh! yes, please; there's nothing I should like better."

Whistling as he went, Prince led her up, or rather left her to follow him up the steep side staircase into a dismal wing, where dust, disturbed by their foot-fall, leapt up in their faces insultingly, as though questioning their right to disturb the repose of years.

Prince's look darkened as he strode on ahead—darkened on the look of ruin and decay which marked the noblest part of the Crown of Rockby, from which all the gems had dropped, leaving only the bare tarnished setting behind.

This wing showed signs of restorations which had been but half completed.

The long stained windows of wonderful artistic effort looked out upon the open sea.

At last they paused before a suite of rooms leading one into another, each in its way a sepulchre of artistic old-world beauty; the hangings, carpets, and glittering mirrors were of more modern date than the handsome ebony furniture.

Lottie looked about her amazed. She had never imagined that the old house contained such comfortable apartments. They were four in number; a bed chamber, and nursery, with one very homelike room which seemed to have once been greatly used.

Over the high mantel-shelf hung a painting of a most beautiful woman of grand majestic looks, which in the picture were softened by an expression of love, for to her breast she clasped a lovely baby.

"Was that your mother?" asked Lottie, in a hushed tone, looking up at her tall cousin on whose face a look of unutterable tenderness lay like soft summer sunlight on a rugged landscape, or down a dark place.

"Yes, that was my dear mother, and these were her rooms, which have been left untouched since her death. She died when I was thirteen years old. Had she lived, life might have been different to us all. Mother died here suddenly from heart disease," he continued; "she dropped down upon her cushions there, and was gone without a groan. My father shut up the room at once and no hand has profaned the place made sacred by her last breath. Come, here is the piano; we must get it moved, and these rooms must be opened and aired; the place is like a vault, with dust enough to stifle one. Let us go down now that you have seen our Blue-beard chamber. You will not dream of its horrors; 'tis only my father who does that. You shall have the music; it will sound strange in this silent place. I wonder if it can speak after so many years? The place is dry, so perhaps it can be doctored."

Lottie followed Prince out of the deserted room, and somehow felt a fuller sympathy with her old uncle, and this morose, silent son of his, who, through all his roughness, carried a tender memory of his mother's love.

About a week after this, just when Lottie had got to think that her piano project was quite forgotten, she returned at dusk to find two men, instructed by Prince, bringing the instrument down the broad oaken staircase.

Seeing her, Prince said, in his surliest tone—

"We have cleared out a little room for you yonder, where you can make as much noise as you please without annoying anyone."

Lottie found a little room, like a vestry made quite clean and comfortable, and in a recess the instrument was placed.

The room had a stained window looking out on the disused garden, and its walls were hung with some fine old tapestry; it had a bookcase full of books, and a side-table loaded with rare old china.

Tears of delight leapt to Lottie's eyes; she could see a chance of making this such a cozy retreat.

With gratitude beaming in her great pathetic eyes, she turned to thank her cousin, but he was gone; so she opened the piano, struck a few strong chords, delighted to find that it was in splendid tune.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Winnie's Defender.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

YE may entertain angels unawares.

"Why, as I sat there, my dear, a-seeming to look at you, I was a-looking years back at your mamma, when she was no older than you are, and thinking how she entertained an angel unawares once.

"Oh, you needn't laugh. It hadn't wings tucked away down its back, no; but what I mean is something sent by the Lord to do you good—an angel in that sense.

"I'm a plain old woman. I hadn't had any education. I was a nurse girl first, and then I minded children, and then I went to your grandma's, to take care of Miss Winnie, that's your own dear ma, Miss Gussie, now, and I ain't learned, and book-read like some, but I've got my thoughts; and bless you, Nero was an angel, and we entertained him unawares. To be sure he didn't look like one, with his black nose against the window and his big eyes a-staring in through the glass.

"Well, I was younger then, you see. I suppose I was twenty-eight and your ma was just fifteen.

"She was as fair as a lily and smaller than you—and you never saw anything so happy.

"Your grandpa had been pretty rich, and he grew very rich afterwards, as you know; but just about that time there'd been a failure or something, and we'd moved from the great city house to a little place out of town and I was the only servant kept. A washerwoman came to do the clothes, and I did all the rest.

"Why, I wouldn't have left your grandma for all the world; and though it was harder than to wait on Miss Winnie, and mend and make for her, bless you, I was glad enough to stay.

"They'd been liberal in old times, and I had my savings too in my bureau drawer. Well, I didn't know then but I might step off some day and need a dowry; but I never meant to have John Connor.

"Who was John Connor? Well, I didn't know then as well as I know afterwards; but he was a thick-set, beetle-browed fellow and called himself a blacksmith, how is a girl to know? and said he'd like to marry me; and huff him as I would, he came a-courtin'.

"Well, bless your heart, though I always fancied a fair man more outspoken, I didn't hate John, and I had a long tongue of my own, and told him all that went on, I suppose.

"And why should I keep it from him that master and mistress had gone to the city that winter night when he came to take a cup of tea with me?

"Your grandma gave me leave. I was never one to do things sly.

"Oh, I didn't tell you that there was some law business up, and that master and mistress had gone to swear to something at the court, and must stay for three days. They'd driven off after dinner, and loth they were to go.

"'You'll be lonesome and afraid,' said the master; but we both said no—we'd take care of each other, and be safe; and I can see Miss Winnie now kissing them both.

"'You've got over being afraid of the dark,' says missus, laughing; 'and the burglars don't know about my rag-bag, so they won't trouble you.'

"With this they were off.

"'What about the rag-bag?' you say. Well, my dear, your ma had a way of thinking that the best way of hiding money was to put it in some odd place, where no one would think of looking; so, what money she had, and some diamond earrings and that, she kept hid away at the bottom of a calico rag-bag.

"'And I'd taken the idea, and kept my savings in a roll of old pieces in my top drawer.

"That's what she meant, you see, and it put it into my mind, so that when John Connor came that night and hearing that the master and mistress had gone away, asked me if I was afeard, and turned up his nose with the speech that there wasn't much to take, he supposed, I, feeling my temper rise, and being up about the family says, says I—

"'Outside don't show everything, John, and 'tisn't many ladies has diamonds as fine as my lady keeps in her rag-bag.'

"'What's that nonsense?' says he.

"'Well,' says I,' no nonsense at all; but my lady has the finest of diamonds that she has worn, and will wear again some day; worth a great deal of money—thousands, I've heard say; and for safety she hides them in her piece-bag, in the long pantry. And for the matter of that, I've enough in my roll of patches in my chest of drawers to make worth a burglar's while to break in.'

"'Very well,' says he. "'I'll believe you, if I like. Many a lady has bits of glass set in rings and things, and much you'd know the difference.'

"'They shine like stars,' says I 'I'm no fool to take glass for diamonds. More and be token they were wedding presents from a relation. I've heard her say, but for that she'd have sold 'em to help master. But we'll live in style again, John Connor,' says I; 'I've heard master talk.'

"'No doubt,' says John, and turned up his nose again.

"'But I remember thinking of a sudden what a bad face he had, the kind of a face, don't you know, that seems to watch you, and yet be afeard of looking at you.

"And then I felt a little sorry I'd told him, I own—thinking that he wasn't the best man to tell such things to, maybe, after all.

"Not that I had any notion how bad he was yet, but just a sort of a dread of him that I couldn't understand and that passed in a minute.

"I remember, to this day, just how he stood leaning against the wall, after he'd swallowed his five cups of tea, bragging about the fine property his father owned cross the sea, and how he'd come into it some day, and that the woman that had him would be a lady before she died, but he didn't make me w sh to be that with all his talk, and I was glad to get the door shut on him at last—for, though you mightn't think it now, there was one at sea that night that would have put thoughts of a better man than John Connor out of my head—one that never came back, dearie—never came back again.

"But that's not what I began to tell.

"When John was gone I ran to look for Miss Winnie, and I found her in the parlor and angry enough I was to find her at her old tricks again.

"From a baby Miss Winnie had always been fond of pets, and the more wretched a thing was the more she loved it. Sick puppies, and blind cats, she'd had. Once she brought home a wretched chicken with a broken back, and nursed it until it died; and once she found a miserable horse turned out to starve, and got a boy to bring that after her.

"We never knew what to expect of the next, and, now, there she was sitting before grate feeding a miserable wet dog with cold chicken.

"His muddy paws had daubed her nice grey merino dress and blue jacket, and I couldn't bear to see her handling him, rubbing his black head with her little white hands, and treating him as if he was a Christian.

"'Oh, Miss Winnie,' said I; 'don't, please. I don't know how dirty that brute may be, and he looks as if he was going mad. Just feed him and turn him out, if it's only to oblige me.'

"She looked up with tears in her eyes.

"'Oh, don't be cross to the poor faithful thing,' she said; 'don't, please. He belongs to the poor man who died—the man whose name no one knew, who was buried last Saturday.

"'The poor thing has been lying on his grave ever since; and to-night I went and coaxed him away.

"'Truer than men he has been, nursey, and I mean to keep him for my very own.'

"'Then I can tell you your ma won't like it, miss' said I; 'he's no lady's dog.'

"'His eyes look human,' said she, drawing his head down and kissing him. That made me mad.

"'Don't send him him into my kitchen, miss,' said I.

"'I shan't, he's parlor company,' said she.

"Then I went away, and I can't deny I banged the door; but, there now, we all have our tempers. I kept mine up all next day, and twice I kicked the poor creature; but before night something happened that quite changed my mood; for what should come to me but a bit of a letter, telling me that my only brother at the coal mines had fallen down a shaft and was not expected to live, and that I must come at once.

"I'd been cross to my little Miss Winnie all day; but, bless you, she never remembered it.

"'Go to your brother, nursey dear,' she said, 'and don't be quite despairing; while there is life there is hope.

"'Papa and mamma will be home to-morrow, and I shan't be a bit afraid.'

"Then she tied my hat with her own hands—yes; and pinned my shawl about me, and kissed me too.

"And off I went to the railway station; and my last words were—

"'Fasten the house up close, my dear, and let no one in.'

"After that I thought only of my brother, until I got to the mines; and going to the place he boarded at, waked them all up, to find him as well as ever, and not an accident happened.

"The message was a wicked trick; and the minute I told my brother, he said it was someone who wanted me away for a bad purpose.

"'To rob the house, maybe,' said he, 'and no one in it but that pretty little lady.'

"'What shall I do?" said I, wringing my hands.

"'I'll tell you,' said he. 'There's a coal train in ten minutes. They'll take us on when I tell them the story. They know me. We'll go down, and Sam Bird, my mate here. You must make time, though, to catch it.'

"Well, they tossed on their coats, and pulled on their boots, and off we started. I was young and light of foot then. We just caught the train.

"It's life and death, mates," cries Jim, jumping on, and dragging me after him.

"The men helped us up.

"It was a queer ride.

"The air seemed to cut me like a knife, and the coal-dust blackened me; but all I cared for was to get to Miss Winnie.

"As we reached our town, a man—I don't know what he was, flung himself across the coal cars, and shouted to us,

"'We can't stop, but we'll slack up at—— Can the woman get off safe?'

"'Yes,' said I, don't fear.'

"But if it hadn't been for Jim and his mate, I never should have done it.

"'Now for the house,' says Jim. 'Show us the way, sister, and do your best. I doubt if all is right there.'

"And on we ran; and I saw at last in the moonlight the white walls, and the black trees behind them standing tall against the sky.

"'All right, I hope,' says I; and then I gave a scream, for the door stood wide open.

"'Softly,' says Jim. 'They've been at mischief.

"'Sam, come in; sister, stay back. Hark there's a dog, a fierce one too. Hear him snarl. You didn't tell me you had a dog.'

"Then I remembered the poor creature Miss Winnie had taken it into her head to adopt.

"'I've brought my pistol,' said Sam, and he crept in. Jim followed.

"And just then I heard screams coming from Winnie's room, and stay back I could not.

"We burst in together, and what a sight we saw.

"On the floor lay a man bleeding and torn, though I knew by the striped jacket he wore that it was John Connor; and over him, tearing at him still, stood the strange dog.

"I looked for Miss Winnie.

"Far in the corner crouched something that I guessed to be her, but for all I knew she was dead, she was so white and motionless.

"Dead? Oh, no, dearie. You forget Miss Winnie is your mother now—only fainted; and afterwards she told me the whole story.

"All the evening the dog had acted strangely.

"Just as she sat in the twilight, looking out of the window, he sat and stared at her and gave little whines as though he wanted to tell her something.

"Then he took to pulling her dress.

"She believes John Connor was hidden in the house even then; and when she went to bed the dog crept under it and lay there, growling softly.

"She felt afraid of something, though she could not tell what, and she lay watching the moonlight for a long, long while.

"At last of a sudden she heard the stairs creak, one after the other, and the door of her mother's room open.

"Straight opposite her bed was another door, that led into it, and through this she saw a man with a candle in his hand creep into the room and look about him; and by the light he carried she saw his face quite plainly, and could not help shrieking out, 'It's John Connor!' and at that he came rushing towards her.

"'So you know me,' said he. 'It's a bad thing for you, I can tell you,' but before the words were out of his mouth, he was on the floor, and the dog upon him.

"After that it grew too horrible to see, and the poor dear darling fainted.

"Oh, if I had my way and turned away the angel that was to save my darling, that was sent there for just that; but I didn't—I couldn't.

"You remember him very well, don't you?

"He was old then, and hadn't a tooth in his head; but that was what was left of old Nero.

"They named him Nero afterwards, and he and I were always the best of friends, though he never worshipped anyone but Miss Winnie."

A FUNNY RIVER.—The river Manzanares, upon which Madrid, the capital of Spain, stands, is a mere stream, except when swollen by heavy rains or winter snow. It has accordingly formed the subject of much excellent witticism. Alexander Dumas, the French novelist, said that he said his son went on to a bridge which crosses it and came away disappointed at not being able to find the river. A German ambassador maintined it was the best river he had ever seen, as it was navigable either on horseback or by carriage. It is further asserted that when Ferdinand II. determined to take a walk along the river bed it was necessary to have it well watered to lay the dust.

When Napoleon's army entered Madrid they exclaimed: "What! has the river run away too!" One of the best jokes was that of a young man to whom a glass of water had been fetched during faintness at a bull-fight—"Give it to the Manzanares; it needs more than I do." However, at times, the river, as has been said, acquires a considerable breadth, and Philip II. had a bridge of nine arches built across it. Whereupon Madame d'Aulonz wrote: "When strangers see the bridge they begin to laugh; it seems to them so absurd to find a bridge where there is no water. One visitor said he would advise the city to sell the bridge in order to buy some water with the proceeds." This is a fair budget of wit to have centred round a humble stream.

Bric-a-Brac.

CURIOUS NAMES.—The following curious names are taken from the last English Census—"Albertina Regina Victoria Gothe Boult," "Prince Albert Daniel Gamon," "Turneria Henrica Ulrica da Gloria do Lavinia Rebecca Turner." "Hostillnia Ophiginia Maria Hyphitic Wadge."

THEN AND NOW.—The skill and accuracy of ancient astronomers is strikingly illustrated by the survey of Almamoun, in Mesopotamia, in the ninth century, who gave the earth's mean circumference at 131, 255, 200 feet; according to Clark's elements of 1878 it is 131, 381,455 feet. Even at a period as early as Aristotle, 340 B. C., this mean circumference was known, with astonishing precision, as 131,328,000 feet.

DECIDING FATHERSHIP.—A correspondent of the *Lancet* describes the following as the method employed in China for determining paternity: A basin or cup of clean water is obtained; the supposed father's finger is cut, and then put into the water till some blood trickles; then the child's finger is cut and placed in the water, and if the two bloods immediately unite, the proof is complete. The magistrate is sometimes bribed and the water tampered with.

WHERE WOOD SINKS.—A Cheyenne (Wyoming) paper says: Tenderfeet should know, and all others should not forget that it is more difficult to keep afloat in water in this altitude than in a less altitude. That accounts for the numerous cases of drowning even in comparatively small streams. Young men who could swim with facility in the East have found out to their sorrow, and too late, that they could not do the same here. The light atmosphere considerably reduces the buoyant power of water. This is the case to a remarkable degree in Lake Tahoe, the highest body of water on the continent. In this water even pine wood sinks, and when a man is drowned his body never rises.

CAT BIRDS AND ROBINS.—The Virginia City *Enterprise* relates that a pair of robins and a pair of cat birds had nests near a gentlemans house, and hatched out their young about the same time. One day the cat birds were missed, having probably been shot. The young cat birds were in danger of starvation, and when the robins came home with worms for their young the little cat birds opened their mouths and made a great outcry. The robins understood the appeal and began feeding them. They did not do what they had undertaken by halves. Each evening the female robin sat on her own nest and warmed with her body her own young, while the male robin took to the nest of the cat birds. In this way both broods were reared, the little orphans growing up as strong and lively as though they had been cared for all through by their own parents.

ORACLES.—Pyrrhus, of Greece, was about to make war on Rome. The oracle gave the response, when questioned:—

"Ajo te Æacide, Romanos vincere posse."

Of this the literal rendering is:—

"I say, Pyrrhus, that you the Romans can conquer."

It happened that he was beaten, and then the oracle could say, "I told you so." And if his friends said, "Why, we understood you to say that he could conquer the Romans," the oracle could deny responsibility for the understanding, and point to the text. One other hint we may get from the ancients. The priestesses were fond of putting their responses into hexameter, pentameter, and other kinds of verse. There is obvious advantage in this. Let all love-letters be in poetry, and how hard it would be to prove a breach of promise of marriage! It is the prose that "fetches" the jury.

A BURNING LAKE.—It is said that from one of the chief naphtha wells of Russia the liquid shoots up as from a fountain, and has formed a lake four miles long, and a quarter wide. Its depth is, however, only two feet. This enormous surface of inflammable liquid recently became ignited, and presented an imposing spectacle, the thick black clouds of smoke being lighted up by the lurid glare of the central column of flame, which rose to a great height. The smoke and heat were such as to render a nearer approach, than one thousand yards' distance impracticable. Suitable means for extinguishing the fire were not at hand, and it was feared that the conflagration would spread underground in such a manner as to cause an explosion. This supposition led many inhabitants of the immediate vicinity to remove to a safer distance. The quantity of naphtha on fire was estimated at four and a half million cubic feet.

QUEER BIRDS.—The red-billed hornbill, a native of Africa, like the rest of the genus breeds in hollow trees; it occupies holes, according to Livingstone, in the mopane tree, a very hard wood; the female makes her nest in February, lining it with her own feathers, and lays four or five eggs, of the size of a pigeon's, and of a white color; she remains a close prisoner in the hole until young are fully fledged, a period of eight or ten weeks; during this time the opening is plastered up with clay by the male, with the exception of a slit, three or four inches long and about half an inch wide, exactly fitting the shape of his beak, and through this he feeds the female and the young. While thus imprisoned she gets very fat, and is esteemed by the natives a dainty morsel. They often dig her out, letting alone the lean and overworked male. The female sometimes hatches out two young, and by the time these are fully fledged two others are just out of the egg; she then leaves the nest with the two oldest, and the hole is again plastered up, both parents attending to the wants of the remaining young until they too are able to come forth.

LOVE'S EXCHANGE.

BY D. H. KENNEDY.

There is a pleasant void within my breast—
  It is the place where once my heart did dwell
Ere thou hadst stolen it from its peaceful rest
  By witchcraft-goodness and by beauty-spell.
Restore it not, but let my blissful loss
  Be sweet remembrance of my pilfering fair;
I would esteem it as far less than dross
  If thou returned it from thy bosom's care.
Mayhaps I did abet thee in the deed—
  My heart without thee were an empty toy;
I will not chide if thou but hear me plead,
  O give me thine, and great will be my joy.
Or if, alack, thy heart be given away,
Grant mine a tomb where thine so lately lay.

TWICE MARRIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.—[CONTINUED.]

IT was one, Paul had been told, rarely found in English girls, for he shared the Continental prejudice against the latitude allowed to the fair damsels of Britain, so different from the strict decorum of the French code of manners for their unmarried women.

But Lucy was shy and refined enough even for his fastidious ideas, and he went to sleep wondering whether it were possible that a heart, impervious as yet to the attractions of the most lovely and polished of the sex, should fall a victim to the simple fascinations of this secluded, inexperienced little Welsh girl.

He finally decided that there could be no danger of such a catastrophe, and fell asleep anticipating the pleasure of a long ride with Lucy the next day to ruins of a celebrated old castle not a great distance from Llanover.

As the party assembled for breakfast on the following morning the church-bell was sounding, and its soft note came musically and sweetly through the air into the open windows of the pretty breakfast-room of the Grange.

Laura, who looked fresh and beautiful as ever, and would not even confess to an unconcealable though slight remaining stiffness in her ankle, looked to Lucy for explanation.

"It is not Sunday," she said, "and I thought you had no service in this 'heretic' country of yours except on that particular day."

"But you are not a Catholic, Madamoiselle St. Hilaire," said Lucy.

"Little Quaker, that is no reply to my question," laughed the gay girl. "If I am not a 'rose, I have been brought up among roses,' as the old proverb says; so please to gratify my great thirst for useful information."

"It is only a thanksgiving service for the harvest," said Lady Lloyd, smiling. "Our good pastor thinks it only reasonable that people should spare an hour or two from their labor to thank Him who has blessed the work of their hands so abundantly this year. But you need not go unless you choose."

"Thornton was always one of the new school," said Evan, sarcastically, "wiser and better in his own opinions than his seniors. Old Dawson never thought of such interference with his unlucky parishioners."

"Oh, Evan!" exclaimed Lucy, "how can you be so unjust? Mr. Thornton never interferes except for the good of the people. Surely you forget all his exertions after the fire. I don't know what should have become of your people without him."

"You are at any rate complimentary to your brother's powers, Lucy," said Evan. "I rather believe I could have managed my own affairs perfectly well without his assistance."

"You forget that you were ill, Evan," said the gentle Lady Lloyd. "I must take Mr. Thornton's part, and Lucy's, too, for no man on earth has ever had a better friend and more worshipping little sister than they are."

"Present company excepted," put in Laura, gaily, bowing to Evan, and then making a reverence to her brother. "But," she added, "I should certainly like to go. There will be time for our expedition afterwards—will there not?"

"I do not think there will," returned Evan.

But Paul quickly said:

"Certainly we will go. It will augur ill for our visit if we begin it by turning our back on the church-bell on such an occasion. Will not Sir William join us, Lady Lloyd?"

The baronet had not appeared that morning, and no notice had been yet taken of his absence.

"I am not sure. He has one of his nervous headaches," she replied, timidly glancing at Evan. "His health is terribly uncertain now."

"It is simply madness to go with your sprained ankle," whispered Evan to his companion.

"Then I must remain at home all day," she replied; "and I can assure you I have no taste for that."

"If you do, I shall also stay," returned Evan.

"As you please," said Laura, smiling; "only you would not be blessed with my society. I never encourage people in doing wrong."

"Not if you were the sole cause?" said Evan.

The girl's eyes were lowered before his, but she evaded any reply by springing up from her seat and volunteering to accompany Lucy, who was just going on some commission from her mother to the domestic offices.

"I have a great desire to see the whole of an English interior," she said. "Do take me with you, Miss Lucy."

Evan frowned, and walked carelessly to the window, apparently unmindful of her movements.

The girls started off together to the pantry, which looked out on the poultry-yard.

Hannah was standing at the open window giving some directions to one of the men, the nature of which was indicated by the cackling of hens and the screams of terrified chickens.

Lucy drew back and covered her face, but Laura went forward, and looked from the window.

"They are just about to bring an unfortunate turkey to the scaffold," she said, turning to Lucy.

"Ah, poor Dan, I have fed and petted him like a child," said the girl, shuddering; "I could not look at his death; come, let us go."

"It will not hurt him more because we are watching," said Laura, and she again looked from the window.

In another brief moment the unfortunate feathered Louis XVI. of the Grange was headless.

Laura turned once more from the window to her companion.

"What—actually pale!" she exclaimed; "you are not very brave."

"I cannot bear to see anything killed," replied Lucy. "It seems as if the blow hurt me."

"What would you do if a war broke out, and you saw men killed instead of chickens?" said Laura.

"I could not. It would kill me," said Lucy. "Could you bear to see a human being murdered—someone you had looked upon—perhaps loved?"

"That would depend," said Laura. "I can imagine circumstances when I could look on without a shudder. These are wrongs for which only death can atone, and for these a man ought to die; such wrongs sometimes spring only from the man one has loved."

Her eyes flashed dangerously.

She looked for a moment like a woman who would, indeed, if necessary, take revenge into her hands, and follow it up relentlessly to the end.

Ah, had Evan Lloyd heard and seen her then!

Lucy was half-astonished, half-troubled, at the lovely stranger's words.

Laura saw her pained look, and said, with a gay laugh:

"It is not probable that either of us will be called on to prove our words, so pray don't look so reproachful."

"You could not do it," said Lucy, earnestly.

"Well, perhaps not."

"I know you could not."

"Come," said Laura, "give your orders, and let us go and get ready, for, in spite of my bravado, I could not walk very fast this morning."

Mr. Thornton had not miscalculated his people's willingness to heartily obey his call.

When the Grange party arrived at the porch, the villagers were flocking into the sacred edifice, and many curious, but respectful eyes, were turned on the baronet's family and their guests.

Evan led the way, with his mother on one side, and the brilliant young French girl on the other, whose exquisite toilette and rich brunette beauty filled the simple peasants with admiring awe.

Then came Lucy, blushing slightly at the admiring words she caught at her girlish loveliness, so well set off by the simple pale-blue muslin and white muslin mantle, with the coquettish little hat that became her young face so well.

The young count walked by her side, apparently quite unconscious of the attention he excited.

His glance turned on his companion from time to time when he had a chance of gazing on her unobserved.

He was too chivalrous to pain her by too obvious admiration.

They entered the sacred edifice, and from that moment the thoughts of three of those four young creatures were absorbed in the worship they came to offer.

Lucy looked thoughtful and happy as she knelt in prayer, and then listened to the short but touching exhortation of Charles Thornton, who simply and reverently sought to turn the exulting satisfaction of his hearers into gratitude to Him from whom all blessings flow.

Perhaps Paul would have been more thoroughly content with the sermon had the preacher been less young and attractive.

But he was too noble and generous to refuse a cordial assent to the praise which Lady Lloyd gave him.

"Your pastor is charming—quite dangerous," said Laura, gaily, as she and Evan returned together.

"To weak minds, perhaps," he replied, scornfully.

"Thank you for the compliment," returned Laura. "But who was that Madonna-looking creature to whom your sister kissed her hand as we came out of the church? It was a lovely face, but a very sad one."

Evan hesitated for a moment or two, and then replied:

"I don't remember seeing Lucy notice any one."

"Hush," said Laura; "don't tell fibs. I saw you look at my pretty saint more than once, and she blushed when her soft eyes once accidentally met yours. She sat in a pew near the pulpit, with an old couple."

"Oh, I suppose you mean Miss Herbert," replied Evan, carelessly; "she is the daughter of a neighboring farmer."

"Oh, Evan, I did not tell you how delicate poor Winifred Herbert has been," said Lucy, who had overheard the remark; "she looks as if she were going into a decline; so very delicate, but very beautiful—more so than ever, I think."

Laura looked keenly at Evan.

His brow was decidedly dark and gloomy, and it was some minutes before he spoke again.

Laura moved to the other side of her brother.

She was not one to be treated with caprice or indifference without resenting it; and Evan's manner had been peculiarly strange and fitful since they had reached the Grange.

Her high spirit resented this slight from a man who had hitherto been her devoted slave, and she was glad when the proposed expedition to Chirk Castle was postponed to the following day, for lack of time to undertake it after the service.

It would have been equally irksome to maintain her affected reserve, and lowering to her feminine dignity and high spirit to pass over the supposed wrong, and treat the offender with her usual playful coquetry of manner.

It was the first time she suspected that her happiness was not entirely in her own keeping.

She remained for the rest of the day close to the side of Lucy Lloyd or her own brother.

Evan made little effort to disturb the arrangement.

He, too, was grave and pre-occupied, and after tea made some excuse to leave the party.

"I may, perhaps call in on Thornton, my dear mother," said he; "so don't wait supper for me."

"If you do, ask him to dine with to-morrow or next day, Evan," said the baronet, who was unusually cheerful that evening. "I meant him to have been here to-day, but I am so uncertain, and I dare not go to church."

The last words were spoken in a low voice, and both Laura and her brother involuntarily exchanged glances at the strange tone and averted look of their host.

Evan darted a quick, angry glance at his father, and, with a half-muttered assent, left the room and the house.

CHAPTER XVII.

IT was a beautiful moonlight night when Evan Lloyd left the Grange, but he walked hastily along, little heeding its calm loveliness.

His handsome face was dark and troubled, as he took the well-known way to Llanover Farm.

But it was not the accustomed path by the mill-bridge that he chose; there were wretched memories connected with that spot that he could not encounter at that hour and on that errand, and he went by a more circuitous path, which led to the back of the old-fashioned dwelling, instead of the gate, for the sound of which poor Winifred had been anxiously listening all that weary afternoon.

Poor girl! it had been a dreary rejoicing day for her.

The quiet of the unaccustomed holiday, the absence of her father at a gathering of the neighboring farmers in honor of the occasion, and the consequently unrestrained grumblings and jealous comments of her mother on the gay doings at the Grange, had been absolute torture to her own burdened heart; and when the hours went on, with nothing but the feverish expectation of the coming of one whom she pictured to herself as lingering by the side of that beautiful foreign-looking girl, and the dull maundering of the discontented mistress of the farm, to mark their slow progress, Winifred could bear it no longer.

She made some trifling excuse to leave the room, where supper was being laid by the one servant of the house, and stole out by the back door that she might breathe the fresh air for a few moments unnoticed and alone.

Winifred leaned against the palings of gate, where she had many a time watched for Evan and Lucy when they were all happy children bent on some unauthorized expedition, and, covering her face with her hands, abandoned herself to the agony she had so long restrained.

She did not weep; that would have been too great a relief; but she sighed—nay, groaned in the agony of her spirit, and she longed to die if her lover—her husband—had, indeed, forgotten her—had changed towards her.

She felt she could not bear that; she could not bear the disgrace, the overwhelming misery to herself and her parents.

No, that could not be endured; it was impossible.

God would be merciful, and take her from such a future of wretchedness and shame.

"Winifred!" fell suddenly on her ear.

She started at that voice, and her breast bounded violently with the sudden revulsion of feeling which its well-known tone produced.

"Oh, Evan, I thought you would never come," said the young girl.

"Come, come, Winifred, don't meet me with tears, or I shall think you are not glad to see me," returned Evan.

"It has been so long," she said, struggling hard to subdue her emotion. "I have waited for six months for this meeting, Evan, and to-day has seemed longer than the whole time before."

"I could not come before," he replied; "you know it is as long since I saw my mother, and she will scarcely let me out of her sight now."

"But she did not prevent your giving me a glance at church to-day," said Winifred excitedly, "and yet you had not one look for me."

"Silly child! you are fanciful and nervous," exclaimed Evan. "Would you have had me draw observation on you by any special attention, and in church too? Come don't be a simpleton, Winifred."

"Do not speak to me like that, Evan, my husband," she said, looking up piteously in his face.

The last word, however, was whispered so low, that none but Evan, as he stood bending over that almost heartbroken girl, could have heard it, and yet it brought a dark flush of vexation to his face, and he withdrew the arm which had clasped her slender form.

"You complain of my long absence," said he, "but you certainly do not give me a very attractive reception. Have you nothing but tears and reproaches for me on my return?"

"Oh, Evan, dearest Evan, forgive me?" she murmured. "I know I am weak and helpless; but you cannot tell what a fearful load and secret is on my heart. I can scarcely bear to look at my parents—to meet my neighbors—to receive your innocent sister's kiss, with that constant deception on my lips in my every action. It is killing me, Evan, and yet hitherto I have borne it for your sake; but I cannot do so much longer."

"Would you like to be freed from it, Winifred?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, yes!" exclaimed Winifred, with a glad cry of joy. "I knew it would be right when you came home, dear Evan. You would keep your promise, I knew."

He hesitated.

It was impossible even for his hard, selfish nature to be insensible to that lovely, trusting face, that childish joy and trust in his slightest word.

"There are many ways," he said presently, "of releasing you from your bond, Winifred, since it is so intolerable to you."

"I dont understand you," she said, looking up wistfully.

"It might be as if it had never been," he replied.

"Oh, this is a cruel jest, Evan," she said, with a slight cry of pain.

"I am not jesting," he replied; "but this is no place for such talk as our pleasant conversation," he added, bitterly. "Meet me at the old place two hours hence, and we will then speak more freely than we can here. Shall I come in?"

"Oh, yes," said Winifred, sadly. "My father is away but my mother thinks it strange not to see you on your return."

He nodded carelessly and went round the house and knocked at the front door, while Winifred returned slowly and sadly by the other entrance.

It was a sad and constant life of deception for the poor inexperienced child.

"Mercy on us, Mr. Evan, so you are here at last!" exclaimed Mrs. Herbert. "I hardly thought you would condescend to visit us after your travels in foreign parts, and leaving grand company at the Grange."

"But you see you were mistaken, Mrs. Herbert," returned Evan. "I have not lost a day in coming to see my friends."

"Well, I wish you'd come when the master was at home," said the old lady, determined to find some legitimate ground for grumbling. "I'm no fit company for you, Mr. Evan; and as to Winifred—— Why, where is the girl? Winny, Winny, I say: here's Mr. Evan. She's grown so moping of late, Mr. Evan, she's of no good to any one. All from the grand school I predicted. I knew no good would come of it."

Poor Mrs. Herbert; she little knew the truth of her words.

Winifred entered at her mother's call, looking certainly as downcast and timid as to justify the description, and she received Evan's well-acted greeting almost in silence.

She could not dissemble as he could.

"And what does Sir William say to the grand folks you've brought with you?" continued the old dame. "They'll be too much for him, I reckon. Why, he's never been like himself since you left; always shut up with those terrible headaches, as they're called, and hardly ever at church; he who used to be so regular at service and sacrament too. Why, to my certain knowlege, he's never once taken the sacrament since his illness."

"My father is decidedly very much out of health," replied Evan, who had his own reasons for humoring the old woman's impertinent comments; "but I hope he will recover, now I have come back to take charge of him a little."

"I shouldn't think your gay company would help him much," resumed the old woman fretfully. "They look quite outlandish to plain Welsh folks like us."

Evan's good humor seemed unconquerable, and he only laughed as he replied.

"They are old friends, or rather the children of old friends, of my father, Mrs. Herbert, and he is very glad to see them.

"And they speak English as well as ourselves, and as you see, go to church even when it is not Sunday. As if they were good, sober natives of Llanover."

"The gentleman's a count isn't he, Mr. Evan?" asked Mrs. Herbert, her curiosity getting the better of her bad humor.

"Yes, and a richer one than some of the foreign counts, Mrs. Herbert," was the

reply, "or he would not be worth half as much as a simple English gentleman."

"Then the lady's got a fortune too, I suppose?" continued Mrs. Herbert.

"Probably," replied Evan.

"And you and she will make a match of it, I suppose?" was the next query.

Evan could not keep back the color from his face, knowing that other eyes besides Mrs. Herbert's keen ones were on his features.

"Really, you know more than I do, or the young lady either," was his reply; but the crash of a flower-pot prevented the conclusion of the sentence.

"Why, Winny, you've broken your favorite fuchsia!" exclaimed the old lady. "Really, child, you're losing what wits you had left."

"And I shall be accused of losing my memory if I stay longer," said Evan, glad to escape from further inquisition, "for I promised to be home to supper.

"I will come again to see Mr. Herbert. I see I must not wait for him now."

The young man took his leave, giving Winifred, who was picking up the broken flower, a significant pressure of the hand as he passed.

Two hours afterwards, a thickly muffled figure stole into the shelter of the thick wood, and looked timidly round.

It was but for a moment, for the person she sought was faithful to the tryst, and Winifred nestled in his outstretched arms like a bird seeking shelter from an eagle's pursuit.

"Oh, Evan, dear, dear Evan," she said, "tell me that you love me still."

"I do, Winifred," he replied, "indeed I do. You are dear to me—very dear still."

"And you will keep your promise," she said, "and free me from this terrible concealment of our marriage?"

"Hush, hush, Winifred!" said Evan; "it is not worth while to talk like that, even when we are alone.

"You must know as well as I do, that it is no time for what you urge just now."

"But you said there was a way, Evan. Tell me, were you jesting then?"

"I was not, Winifred; I was in earnest," he replied. "It is open to you, if you choose, to forget that rash business, and let us be free again—old friends, brother and sister, if you will."

Winifred started from his arms, and gazed at him with half-bewildered, half-terrified looks.

"What wretched jest is this, Evan?" she said slowly, and with a calm, unnatural fierceness.

"I am your wife, in the sight of God and man. Nothing can make that as if it had never been—nothing shall.

"I will not endure such shame, nor bring my parents to the grave by their child's dishonor.

"I demand now—I do beg—to be acknowledged as your lawful wife."

"A demand I distinctly refuse," was the calm, deliberate reply, every word of which came cold and sharp on poor Winifred's heart.

"You cannot—you dare not!" she cried, with an impetuous passion all foreign to her gentle nature.

"Evan Lloyd, you know that I am your wife—married by the ordinance of God's Church and the laws of man.

"I owe you obedience, as my husband. I have yielded it, contrary to every feeling, every sense of duty, and concealed our marriage according to your own commands.

"But I will not be disowned and disgraced openly, without asserting my rights—my woman's fair fame and honor."

Evan gazed at the poor girl as she stood in the pale moonlight, and thought her more beautiful than he had seen her, though the character of that beauty was completely changed at that moment.

The soft, dreamy gray eyes were flashing and restless.

The cream-like cheek had a brilliant bloom that made the skin absolutely dazzling in the contrast.

The girlish figure looked taller and more commanding from the sudden assumption of woman's dignity.

She was not to be easily and completely relinquished, even in favor of her brilliant and high-born rival.

"You allow your impetuous feelings to make you unjust to yourself and me, Winifred," said Evan, with an admirable mixture of outraged goodness and dignified forbearance in his manner.

"Have you known me from childhood without understanding me better than this?

"Do you not remember from our earliest days that I never would be threatened or coerced into even what I intended and wished to do?

"Can you therefore suppose that the course you are taking is likely to bind me down to you?"

"I know not; I could almost say I care not!" exclaimed the poor girl, bursting into a paroxysm of hysterical weeping. "If I were but away—away from every one—in the cold grave, where I could see no one—disgrace no one!

"Oh, Evan, Evan, I have so loved you! It is killing indeed to hear you disown what you prayed for—agreed—promised everything to obtain!

"Have some mercy, Evan, on me, for I am bowed to the earth."

The poor girl spoke literally, for even as the words passed her lips her strength gave way, her limbs trembled under her, and she would have fallen had Evan not caught her in his arms.

"Winifred," said he, "my darling, my own!"

The words would almost have brought her back from the grave.

Her eyes opened, and the long eyelashes wet with tears, were once more raised from her soft cheek.

"Listen, Winifred, and do not distress us both so cruelly by such needless reproaches," continued Evan.

"I never said I would disown our marriage. I told you I distinctly refused a 'demand'; and I must in common prudence choose my own time for the avowal of the tie that unites us; and, what is more, I expect, nay, I require this proof of your obedience to your husband."

The old artifice.

It had its effect once more, at least in part.

"But it is so weary, so hopeless," she murmured, feebly. "You said if I would be patient till your return you would relieve me of my anxiety, and now you have come back, it is still the same.

"Oh, Evan! is it not more than you should ask or expect of a poor helpless girl?"

"But my Winny has sense, and devotion and unselfishness, that only fail her in a moment of excitement and misunderstanding like this," he replied, soothingly, "Trust me but a little longer, love, and you will see that all will turn out for the best."

Winifred was silent.

Her thoughts seemed absent and wandering.

At length she said abruptly, "That French girl is very beautiful."

"Do you think so?" said Evan, carelessly.

"Do you not think so?" she asked.

"Perhaps," he replied; "yet; but not such fair, soft beauty as my Winifred's. It is a more brilliant, though less touching loveliness."

She half smiled.

The poor jealous heart was so easily soothed with such delicious flattery.

"But you have been a long time with her," she said; "you pay her great attention, Evan."

"Very likely," he replied, "and shall continue to do so, Winny; and yet you must not be jealous, little one.

"It is the fashion of her country to expect homage without love, and that I am ready to give.

"My darling little wife cares little for homage, a great deal for love, and she has what she desires to the full."

Poor little Winifred! once more she nestled to that cold heart, and repented her late jealous vehemence.

She was so happy now, she wondered at her late misery and passionate despair.

"But, Evan," she said, "how can I tell that the brilliant high-born heiress will not make you regret your bond to poor humble Winifred?"

"I am quite sure, dearest, I shall never feel differently from what I do now," he replied; but a peculiar smile crossed his lips.

"Rest satisfied of that," he added, "and do not spoil our stolen hours together in future by the idle fears and passions. So soon as my plans are complete, I promise you I will not keep you another hour in suspense."

Winifred had a vague feeling that something was wanting in this speech—that it lacked clearness and sincerity.

She was too young and too loving not to wish to be deceived when there was a possibility that distrust might be an injustice to the beloved one.

So she silently returned the fond embrace and loving kiss which followed the speech of her lover, and after a few more broken sweet words of that delicious nature so intelligible and so full of meaning to lovers, the young pair parted, with a promise on Evan's part to see her again very soon.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE next day was splendidly fine, the very ideal of a beautiful early Autumn day when the air is fresh, not cool, the sun brilliant and warm without the burning heat of Summer, and the country wears the soft hues of the changing season without losing one particle of its luxuriance and beauty.

The young party at the Grange were in high spirits as they set off on their expedition to Chirk Castle, and the arrangements which were made necessary by the slight remains of Laura's accident were especially agreeable to at least two of the party.

Both Lady Lloyd and Paul had declared it quite impossible for Laura to ride so far with her weak ankle.

It was settled that Evan should drive her in his mother's pony carriage, while Paul and Lucy were to accompany them on horseback.

Laura resisted vigorously, and pouted very prettily at the plan.

She seldom went counter to her brother's wishes when they were decidedly expressed, and at length she yielded with a tolerable grace.

Paul looked at Lucy with a grave, admiring glance that brought the color to her cheek as he lifted her on her horse.

Very lovely, indeed, she looked in her pretty hat and habit, her eyes sparkling at the anticipated pleasure, so rare since the last weary months of seclusion and anxiety.

They set off at a rapid pace, the equestrians leading the way, and the fleet Welsh ponies following at a very slight distance with dashing speed.

Their way lay along the stream, and necessarily commanded a view of the church and parsonage and Llanover Farm.

As they dashed past, Charles Thornton was just leaving the cottage of a sick parishioner, and he lifted his hat to Lucy with a grave bow.

"That is your cure," observed Paul; "he is very young and nice-looking for the charge of a parish."

"Oh, it is not his: he is only the deputy for our old rector," said Lucy; "but it has been a great blessing for us and the village that he was here during the dreadful time of the fire and papa's illness.

"Mr. Dalton is too old and infirm to have done one quarter of what Mr. Thornton has accomplished."

"He is a great favorite of yours," remarked Paul, sharply.

"Yes, I like him exceedingly," replied Lucy.

Nothing but incipient jealousy could have mistaken that frank speech, but Paul felt half annoyed.

"Did Sir William's illness immediately follow the fire?" he asked, after a few moments' pause.

"Yes, very soon after; not immediately," replied Lucy. "Oh, you would not have known him again if you had seen him before that dreadful illness he was so bright and genial, and full of energy and sense and judgment.

"And now, poor, darling papa, he is so often quite laid aside, that I am in constant terror for him."

"It is strange that it should have such an effect on him," remarked Paul musingly. "I suppose the loss was very heavy?"

"No; it was insured quite to the value, I believe," said the young girl innocently; "but the very name of that unfortunate mill brings on one of papa's bad fits. As you say, 'tis very strange."

Paul had remarked almost the same singular effect on Evan, and the young Frenchman's acute mind was fairly set on speculation by the coincidence.

But he made no further remark, and, changing the subject to pleasanter topics, he and his fair companion were soon engaged in a familiar interchange of thoughts and ideas, which seemed to advance their intimacy of days in as many minutes.

It was a charming hour for Paul, and perhaps for the young Lucy too.

And Evan and Laura, what did they talk about?

We can scarcely say.

The half words and looks and allusions were unintelligible and uninteresting to any but themselves.

Once, however, as they passed Llanover Farm, the girl asked, "Who lives at that charming old place?

"What a picturesque panorama that quaint house, and those fine trees, and green turf make."

"Yes, it is a fine old farmhouse," said Evan.

"But who lives there?" she asked.

"A farmer named Herbert," he replied.

"Ah, the father of a beautiful Madonna," said Laura. "You must take me to see them."

"You would not like it," said Evan; "they are such old-fashioned, uncultivated people, they would not know how to behave to you. Do not think of it."

"But I shall think of it," persisted Laura. "I like old-fashioned, quaint people; and as to roughness, I delight in that, and opposition too, or how should I endure you, the most cross-grained, obstinate person in the world, as every one says?"

"But I hope you do not say so, Laura dear."

"Laura!" she repeated.

"Have I offended, then?—nay, pardon me," stammered Evan.

"I don't know. Of course," said Laura.

She blushed scarlet under his glance, for she felt that her own thoughtless encouragement had kindled the audacity burning there.

"Oh, if I had only a right!" said Evan; "if every glance at that face were not a presumption on my part!"

She looked up, softened by the humility of his speech, but still dissatisfied at the tones of his voice.

"Why do you speak of presumption?" she said, gently. "It is no great crime to forget strict proprieties for once."

"The familiarity," said he; "yes, you might forgive that; but the feelings, the daring imprudence within; can you pardon that?"

He waited for a moment, expecting her to speak, but she was looking out on the glorious landscape, and he could only see that one of her cheeks was glowing like a ripe peach.

"You will not say one word to reassure me," he said, stooping his head to gaze on her half-averted face, and feasting on her mantling blushes, as a child loooks eagerly on tempting fruit.

"I should not fancy that you need much reassuring, Mr. Lloyd," she said, half-nervously, half in pretty defiance of her own feelings.

"No," said he; "you think I must possess sufficient audacity to dare to indulge human feelings where one so rich and beautiful is concerned—I, the poor Welsh baronet's son.

"I have shown you my home—shown you the humble plainness which must look like poverty to one brought up like you. Do you scorn me for my lack of wealth?"

"You know I do not scorn you for nothing; least of all, for what I have seen in your house," she said, feelingly.

"But though my blood may be equal to yours, I am poor," said Evan, "while you are noble and wealthy, as well as beautiful and gifted.

"What on earth do I possess to make me on an equality with you?"

"It is not for me to point out your advantages, Mr. Lloyd," replied Laura. "But, granting for argument's sake, that I possessed the attributes you pretend, they are things which confer no real merit.

"What is beauty or wealth, or noble name, the accidents over which we have no real control, and which are no real distinction.

"All that relates to you as a man, or me as a woman, you have left out—thought, energy, intellect, generosity, integrity—all that makes up life, and honor, and true nobility."

Laura was greatly agitated as she said this.

The color flushed in and out of her face like gleams of lightning; her lips grew bright with the words that came so impetuously from them.

The veil she had drawn down over her face trembled with the vehemence of her feelings.

She had answered his question—twice answered it,—and now he wished not to press the subject further.

He dared not commit himself yet; no, even his daring, unscrupulous spirit shrank from the final plunge that would decide his fate and that of Winifred Herbert.

That sweet, fair face rose up and seemed to come between him and the brilliant, stately, noble woman at his side, with its mild and innocent beauty.

And another more ghastly image came to chill the words that should have come burning from his lips,—a face, stern, pale, and threatening, which seemed to threaten retribution for his crime, and to warn him from the cruel treachery he meditated.

Was it wonderful that he sat thoughtful and meditating by the side of the beautiful creature, who actually thirsted for the eager confession that her noble generosity should have brought.

But he only said; with a humility that rather galled than flattered her.

"Oh, if I dared—if I only dared!"

The blood turned crimson in Laura's cheek, but now it was with womanly indignation and self-reproach rather than girlish timidity.

Every word she had uttered stung her as her as a disgrace.

Was he modestly retreating now that she had gone so far?

Had he drawn her on to a tactic confession of his power only to triumph in it?

She clenched her small hand till the grasp pained her; she bit her lips till they glowed like blood-red coral and at last she dashed her little foot down into the bottom of the carriage in a paroxysm of self-humiliation and reproach.

"What is the matter? Have I worried you by my slow driving and stupid murmuring?" he asked, tenderly.

"No," she replied; "but I want to get to the ruins. You see we are far behind Paul and your sister. Oh, I wish I had insisted on riding; I would have done so, but for your mother's sake."

"Not for mine?" he whispered.

"Of course not," she replied. "There, give me the reins! I shall drive,—nay I will."

Laura's spirit was in revolt.

She longed to assert herself to do something that would prove her disregard of Evan's wishes, and regain the position she fancied she had lost.

She seized the whip and reins from his reluctant hands, gave the ponies a sharp cut that sent them forward at an almost dangerous pace, and only laughed scornfully at Evan's warnings that she did not understand the rough irregular Welsh road, and would certainly come to grief if she persisted in such reckless charioteership.

But on she went; the spirited little animals put on their mettle, galloping at the very top of their speed, rapidly losing their usual docility in the excitement of the unaccustomed urging of their fair driver.

Suddenly the road turned before Laura was aware—a sharp, abrupt turn, half hidden by overhanging trees.

She gave a sudden pull at the rein; it broke, and the terrified excited ponies set off at a frantic pace that threatened certain destruction.

Laura sat, white and paralysed at the result of her rashness, while Evan could do nothing but hold her fast in his arms well knowing that to jump would be certain death, and trusting to break in some degree the violence of the shock which he saw must inevitably come.

Neither spoke; but Laura, even in that moment of danger and terror, felt the convulsive grasp of her lover, and the tumultuous beating of his heart, against which she was pressed, and her late anger and distrust passed away.

He loved her, he must love her, or he would not have strained her so passionately to his breast, nor cast such a look of agony on her fair face as it lay, pale and helpless, on his shoulder.

She was self-possessed and brave in that imminent danger.

She uttered no cry, no complaint, but waited quietly for the crisis that must come in a few moments.

But she knew not what Evan knew, that in a few yards more a terrible declivity, amounting to a precipice, would expose them to certain death, unless by some miracle the animals preserved the straight path.

On they went with a headlong impetuosity that made Laura close her eyes, and which took even her stronger companion's breath.

Another moment and they might be dashed down the fearful cliff into that

eternity for which one at least was so ill prepared.

The turn was reached, the moment had arrived, there was a sudden jerk, a loud voice commanding the terrified animals to stop, a powerful hand which with almost superhuman strength forced the carriage back into a deep rut that baffled their efforts to continue their course, and the danger was passed, if not averted.

Evan seized the moment to lay Laura back into the seat and jump from the carriage to aid their deliverer, and by their united efforts the ponies were at last fairly stopped, and, panting and breathless, safely fastened to a large tree at the perilous corner which had nearly been their grave.

Then Laura opened her eyes, and for the first time saw who was their preserver from a frightful death.

It was Mr. Thornton, the clergyman of Llanover, the friend of their hosts, and, as she more than suspected, the admirer of Lucy.

CHAPTER XIX.

FOR several minutes after the carriage had been stopped by the timely arrival of Mr. Thornton, not a word was spoken.

Evan looked sullen, while Laura sat pale and motionless, but with a heart overflowing with gratitude to the Almighty Preserver of her life, and to the brave man who had saved them at the risk of his own.

Evan stood gloomy and doubtful, unable to repress the jealous annoyance that Mr. Thornton's interference, timely as it was, occasioned, and equally unable to avoid offering some acknowledgement of the service thus rendered.

Mr. Thornton himself was too much exhausted by the extreme effort he had made to do more than support himself against the carriage door, and panting for breath, his pulsation was almost suspended by the extreme tension of his system.

"We owe you our lives," said Laura, who was the first to speak, holding out her ungloved hand to the clergyman. "Mr. Lloyd, will you not tell this gentleman the name of her to whom he has rendered such a service? I know him already as Mr. Thornton."

Evan could scarcely restrain his vexation at the sweet, gentle look which accompanied the words.

Those beautiful eyes should not, he thought, have worn such an expression except for him.

He had never liked Mr. Thornton; he had been under a galling restraint since the night of the fire; and now he positively hated him.

"Mr. Thornton, let me present you to Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire," he said, coldly, "the daughter of my father's friend." The last sentence seemed to say, "She is not for you—we appropriate her to ourselves. Her sphere and you are widely different." But Mr. Thornton either did not hear, or did not heed the emphasis of the words.

Mr. Thornton had now somewhat recovered himself, and he spoke with his usual simple dignity, which was at once so unaffected and so worthy of his sacred calling.

"I scarcely needed to be told a name which I have heard so often from Miss Lloyd," he said, with a smile; "but I am very glad indeed that I was in time to make an introduction possible. It was a terrible risk.

"How did you let the ponies get away, Mr. Lloyd? They are not generally vicious."

"Oh, it was my fault—my own grievous fault, to use confessional language;" replied Laura, recovering her gaiety, as she saw Evan's vexation.

"I insisted on driving unknown horses on unknown roads, and behold the result. Only, in my folly, I might have sacrificed life far more valuable than my own."

Wicked coquette! thus to frame her phrase so doubtfully that it might be appropriated at pleasure.

"After such a penance as this fright, I will absolve you," said the clergyman, smiling; "but, Mr. Lloyd, is not that your sister and M. de St. Hilaire, I suppose, coming towards us?"

He was right.

Their delay had alarmed Lucy, who was, moreover, shyly embarrassed at so long a *tete-a-tete* with Paul, and had proposed turning back to see what had become of the laggards.

With the quick perception of her character and nation, Laura scanned the countenances of her new friend and preserver as they met.

She could discover little to confirm the ideas she had formed.

Lucy, she saw, was completely engrossed by the peril they had lately run, and by anxiety for herself after such agitation.

Mr. Thornton, after rather a grave greeting to the young girl, seemed entirely occupied with the necessary consultation as to the next proceeding.

"You will scarcely like to trust yourself to those wild Welsh ponies again, Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire," he said, with a grave smile.

"Say, rather, the wild French girl is not more to be trusted, than the poor innocent ponies," she replied, laughing. "But I shall stipulate for you to accompany us, Mrs. Thornton.

"I could not possibly risk the lecture Mr. Lloyd is preparing for me."

"Pardon me, I have neither the wish nor the right to lecture Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire," said Evan, haughtily. "But, of course, I will relieve her of my presence, if it is disagreeable to her."

Laura had been more shaken by the recent alarm than she would confess, and it was with difficulty she restrained the tears that sprang to her eyes at the bitter speech.

Mr. Thornton read her, better even than those who knew her well.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LOVER AND LORD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN ANGEL UNAWARES" "A SHOCKING SCANDAL," "SOWING AND REAPING," "PEGGY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—[CONTINUED.]

FORGOTTEN him? No. But she cannot wail out her life beside his grave. Don't be so ridiculously sentimental, Vance. I cannot argue with a person so absurd."

Vance was not sorry to drop the subject.

If Nora's had not been real love and real heart-grief, then women's tears were worth nothing, and women themselves worth little more.

And somehow he was especially unwilling to think ill of women just then.

If Nora had forgotten her brave young lover and consoled herself with a battered coronet so cruelly soon, why, Nettie Clare might be less frank and honest than she seemed!

The reflection, irrelevant and illogical as it was, vexed and irritated him.

He met Nora coldly, and proffered his congratulations with no ill grace that seriously annoyed his mother and delighted Cristine, who was boiling over with spite and envy, and credited him with a full share of her own agreeable feelings.

Nora however did not seem to heed his displeasure.

Just as he left her he found her, coldly composed, apathetic, and indifferent.

The only change was in the great diamond ring that glittered on her little finger and the extreme deference and attention with which she was now treated.

When he made the bridegroom's acquaintance, Vance set him down in rough and ready fashion as a supercilious snob, desperately in love with Nora, and prepared for her sake to extend a haughty toleration to all connected with her, even at first to him, though he was unmistakably the bitterest pill of all.

And he hardly wondered at that, for he hated the sight of his lean gray face and cruel crafty eyes, hated the thought that he would take poor Arthur's place.

So he made himself offensive to him of malice prepense.

And Lord de Gretton returned the compliment with interest.

Vance understood him, Mrs. Bruce, and Cristine well enough.

Nora puzzled him sorely.

If she had frankly shown any pleasure in the costly gifts Lord de Gretton heaped upon her, or any great interest in the brilliant future opening out before her, he would simply have scorned and forgotten her.

Had she made any struggle to escape her quickly-coming doom, he would have helped her as far as in him lay. But she did neither.

The gifts moved her to no more interest or gratitude than an idol shows when such are laid upon his shrine, and she gave no sign of shrinking even when they fixed the wedding-day.

Afterwards he knew that he at least should have heeded the warning thus given, and saved the desperate girl from the horror to come—should have known that that terrible calm foreboded as terrible a storm.

But he was as blind as the rest, and, like those she had loved and trusted less, he left her to her fate.

CHAPTER XIII.

IT was part of the miserable fatality that cut Nora off from all hope and help at that time that Vance saw next to nothing of his step-sister in the weeks preceding her marriage.

His intense instinctive dislike to Lord de Gretton made him very unwilling to cross the threshold of the fine South Kensington house that, though nominally taken by Captain Bruce, he knew was provided by the bridegroom-elect.

Moreover, it hurt him to see Arthur Beaupre's promised wife by this new lover's side—for, despite his reckless ways, Vance Singleton was strangely loyal at heart.

And he had plenty to occupy him at that time.

The modest engement of which Nettie spoke had been secured, and, despite the unaccountable nervousness that came upon him at the last moment, his first appearance had been a decided success, and the easily-elated young fellow was filled with glowing hopes for the future, hopes that were not wholly concerned with his professional advancement.

He had played with the fire, never dreaming of the result, and suddenly he found that he was scorched.

He had congratulated himself on his firm friendship with Miss Clare, and found quite suddenly that he was desperately in love.

The shock dazzled him.

Their relations had been anything but sentimental.

Nettie had been the hard task-mistress, the sage adviser.

He had seen her flirt openly with others.

Never had she flirted with him; and yet

It was on the night of his successful debut that he knew his fate.

His heart beat with disagreeable quickness as he glanced across the room and saw the bright little creature chatting and laughing with a tall good-looking man in evening-dress.

He was the critic of a powerful daily newspaper, Vance afterwards knew, and had come round behind the scenes to congratulate her on her success.

Vance thought he might have paid his compliments with less enthusiasm and warmth, and felt the strongest possible inclination "to punch his straw-colored head."

But unluckily he could hit upon no pretence for interfering, so he had to content himself with retiring into the remotest corner of the green-room and scowling at the unconscious Nettie across the parti-colored and ever-sniffing crowd.

That is, he thought her unconscious then, for the brilliant hazel eyes never once wandered in his direction, and the girl's whole attention seemed given to her companion's silver speech.

But afterwards, when the piece was over and the loungers were gone, when two young people were walking home through the gas-lighted thoroughfares and quieter moonlit streets that led to her mother's lodgings—when they two were alone together, he found out his mistake.

They walked on in unusual silence for a little time—she because the coolness of the spring air refreshed and revived her after the heated atmosphere of the theatre, and she thought only of breathing it freely; he because an unusual shyness and a somewhat sulky dignity oppressed him.

Vance was angry with her, yet so fully conscious that his anger was unfounded and absurd that he did not dare to speak it.

Suddenly Nettie broke the stupid silence with a merry little laugh.

"Do you know you did very well to-night Vance?" They had long dropped all titles of ceremony in their easy friendly intercourse.

"Mr. Burgoyne was inquiring quite anxiously about you."

"Mr. Burgoyne was very kind," Vance snarled.

"Oh, Vance, how ungracious you are," Nettie said quickly, "and"—with the little air of prudent foresight that sat with such charming quaintness on the small girl-face—"how imprudent also! Don't you know that Mr. Burgoyne is not only a critic, but an author?"

"He writes comedies with modern gentlemen heroes.

"Only think, Vance"—opening the big hazel eyes delightedly—"what a chance for you!

"I am quite sure, when he was talking to me to-night, and you were scowling like a demon at the unfortunate young man, that he was thinking how he could secure you for his new piece."

The innocent pleading tone, the unconscious revelation of her words, went straight to Vance Singleton's heart, thrilling it through and through with the absurdest ecstasy.

"Did I scowl, Nettie?" he asked eagerly. "Did you see me, dear? Then—then you were not absolutely engrossed in Mr. Burgoyne?"

Something oddly exultant in his tone caused her to look round quickly with surprised bright eyes.

Something in the handsome face made her drop them till the black lashes rested on the smooth skin that burned with a sudden blush.

But Nettie was not easily taken aback; despite that slight evidence of confusion, she answered cheerfully and briskly—

"I cannot understand your prejudice against poor Mr. Burgoyne. Between ourselves, I do not think his plays over-brilliant; but he is one of our most popular authors, and could do anything he pleased for you."

"If he were Shakespeare himself, it would make no difference," Vance said fiercely. "If he would write another *Hamlet* for me, I would not thank him if he wrote for love of you."

The words were truly in the Bombastes vein.

The young man saw nothing absurd in them when he poured them forth with unfeigned and passionate earnestness, nor did Nettie, though her sense of the ridiculous was acute enough as a rule.

She was very far from laughing now—so far that, when he drew a little nearer, he saw the glitter of tears on the dark lashes, saw the red lip quiver in a vain attempt at speech.

He had not made Nettie angry.

He had hurt her, which was far, very far from his wish.

"Forgive me, dear Nettie!" he cried penitently. "I was a brute, a real wretch!"

"You were," Nettie agreed, with a sudden smile and disconcerting candor. "I shall not contradict you, Vance: but please tell me why?"

The question, the pained pleading of the bright eyes sparkling through the tears that he had brought there, set Mr. Singleton's heart throbbing wildly, and forced from his lips the words he did not mean to speak then.

"Why, the answer is a paradox, Nettie! I was harsh and rude and brutal to you, dear, because, best of all things in this world, I love you!"

The last words came out with an abrupt jerk, and were followed by a brief silence.

Nettie gave her companion one quick startled glance, blushed violently, paused, and then walked on rapidly.

He had to walk beside her in impatient silence for a minute or so, for they were not alone in the street, and he could hardly renew his love-suit till their fellow-pedestrains had passed by.

Vance girded at the little restraint at the time.

But perhaps it was as well that it came.

It gave him time to find words and shape his thoughts, and allowed her to recover from the shock of finding an easy-going every-day intimate transformed into an ardent and exacting lover.

At last, the intruders gone, he ventured to draw his companion's hand again within his arm and try to moderate her pace a little.

He felt the slim fingers tremble in his grasp.

She struggled to withdraw them, but so faintly that her lover drew a happy augury from the fact.

"Were you trying to outrun me, Nettie? Are you so angry that you cannot speak to me?"

She raised her eyes with an evident effort.

Assuredly there was no anger in their shining depths.

"Are you sure, Vance?" she asked tremulously, with a troubled drawing together of the pretty pencilled brows that were such expressive features in Miss Clare's face.

"Sure of what, sweetheart?" Vance answered gaily—for she was his sweetheart now; he was sure of her heart as of his own, though as yet the decisive words were all unspoken.

"Sure that it is not a mistake, a fancy?" she asked, with a nervous smile. "Oh, you need not laugh, Vance! Such things often happen; people imagine themselves in love with—with actresses; but it is a mere delusion, after all."

"Is it? Then I pity the people, first for being deluded, next for being undeceived—I am neither.

"It is not an idle fancy that I offer you, Nettie, but a real and honest love. It was not the actress who dazzled me, but the brave and loving daughter, who is the best and truest of all women in my eyes, the only wife in the world for me. Nettie, are you angry still?"

The question seemed to rouse her from a happy dream.

She turned her radiant face round, and quite brave and frankly, as Nettie Clare did all things, placed her little hand in his.

"Angry? No; I am so very, very glad! Is it shocking to say that, Vance? Because it is absolutely true."

She spoke with a nervous haste, half laughing and half crying, as her way was when strongly moved.

"Tell me a little more truth, Nettie. Say you love me."

"I love you!" She repeated the words with a sweet gravity, and then, with one of her rapid changes, began to laugh again.

"I have, I think, loved you always—was it not horrid of me, Vance?—but I thought you would never, never guess. I was always giving you lessons, and finding fault and scolding; I thought you would look on me as a schoolmistress and——"

"And claim a prize?" Vance interrupted, finishing the sentence audaciously. "I claim it now, Nettie; and you will admit my claim."

So, from mistress and pupil, Nettie Clare and Vance Singleton became betrothed lovers, and, to their infinite content, found that the course of their true love ran on smoothly from end to end.

Mrs. Clare heard the story the same night and seemed well pleased to hear it, though she somewhat astonished the lovers by averring that she had seen it all from the first.

"You are all that I could wish for my Nettie, Vance. You know how good she is, how brave and loving and unselfish; so I will not sing her praises now. You have a bright future before you."

"You love her, and will work hard for her sake.

"You are a gentleman, such a one as Robert Clare's child should wed—so far, all things are in your favor; but, there is always a 'but' in this disappointing world, my dear, there are your people, Vance."

She looked and spoke gently.

There was a certain trouble in the kind eyes that were so like Nettie's, with the hopeful light quenched, and there was an earnest ring in the pretty soft voice.

"My people, Mrs. Clare!" Vance said, a little uneasily.

"I thought we agreed, before this question arose, that I was to tread the path I had chosen alone, to win my laurels unaided, and mention them only when they were won. I think I will take the same course with Nettie."

"My dear boy"—the poor woman smiled and sighed together—her conscience and inclination were at war—"you do not know the misery such marriages may cause.

"When I married Robert Clare, I did not know that he had quarreled with all his people for my sake; but it was so, and, though," with a little flush of pride in the remembrance, which for the moment made the worn face young and pretty, "though I know that to the hour of his death he never

ones regretted his choice, yet he felt the estrangement cruelly, as you may some day feel yours."

"Never!" Vance answered, in perfect honesty. "In fact, Mrs. Clare, the arguments that may convince other fellows don't touch me at all.

"Whom have I to quarrel with? A step-father whose generosity I have so tired out that I think he would be glad to see me settle down as a shoemaker, a mother who would never quarrel with me in any circumstances, and who, meeting Nettie as my wife, will surely fall in love with her."

"And your sister?" Mrs. Clare said, as he began to flounder in his speech.

He shrugged his shoulders in genuine indifference this time.

"Cristine will, I do not doubt, be disagreeable, as she invariably is; it would hardly be worth while to consider her."

Still Mrs. Clare looked vaguely troubled longing to banish her doubts and consent for Nettie's sake, to see things through the rosy haze that shrouded them, but conscientiously bent on showing the reverse of the medal and laying all objections to the plan before her would-be son-in-law.

"Then there is the other young lady, Miss Bruce. She is to make some brilliant marriage, Nettie tells me."

"She will be Lady de Gretton in six weeks' time, poor Nora!" said Vance, with heartfelt compassion for the girl whose splendid marriage would be barren of all the love and trust that would richly sanctify his own.

"But Miss Bruce is my step-sister only—not even that indeed—she is my mother's husband's child."

"Hardly a close connection, I admit," Mrs. Clare said, smiling; "still she will be so very grand a personage——"

"Grand or not," the young man interrupted a little impatiently, "Nora is a thoroughly kind and simple-hearted girl. She is the one person I intend to place confidence in, for she is the one person on whom I can rely."

"But——"

"You said there was a 'but' in all things. I do not think there can be another to make protest with in this," he said, cutting her nervous half-hearted objections determinedly short, and turning to welcome Nettie, who at that moment entered the room.

Perhaps Mrs Clare was not, on the whole, very sorry to have her conscientious protests thus trenchantly disposed of.

She was glad that her daughter should find a safe companion and protector in the dangerous path she trod with such innocent self-relying courage, glad to welcome Vance as a son, and relieved to find that the small circle in which her life was bound was to be enlarged, not broken, that they were still to form one family together.

"I always feared that some one would take Nettie from me," she said, with tearful gratitude, when the two young people laid their matured plans for the future before her. "I am thankful you are not a rich man, Vance."

"I wish I were a little richer for Nettie's sake," poor Vance said, remembering rather ruefully that his wife's income would considerably outweigh his own; but the overplus would support her mother and sister; there was comfort to his self-respect in that thought.

"You are as rich as I wish you to be," Nettie said with a joyous laugh, "and you will be the brightest of 'stars' by-and-by. Mother, I hope Vance will not want to hide us in a corner when the Dukes and Duchesses come hunting him by-and-by."

It was a very pleasant feeling, and they were so evidently and fully content with the arrangement that he could not but be content and happy too.

After all, he was young still; his earlier youth had been wasted, but time was on his side; he would redeem his manhood by hard and honest work.

It was beginning life again, on a lower level perhaps but beginning it with an earnest purpose and with Nettie by his side

So all things arranged themselves; and coincidently with those gorgeous arrangements for Nora's wedding with which the fashionable papers were so busy, their modest preparations were made.

Many a time, while Nettie stitched at the trim and dainty dresses she regarded with a simple pride, she would laughingly bid her lover read the costly items of his step-sister's *trousseau*, as the florid millinery vocabulary set them forth.

"Satins and velvet, and lace and broche, and brocatelle and—— Oh, I cannot count up even the materials!" she said, looking up into his face with joyous laughing eyes. "What a happy girl she must be, Vance!"

"Poor Nora!" Vance answered a little bitterly. "She has made an excellent bargain but she is very far from happy."

"You think she has not forgotten Mr. Beaupre; but, if that were so, she would not marry Lord de Gretton, surely!"

Vance smiled at her eager certainty.

This girl of a lower world knew so little of the social sacrifices imposed as solemn duties on the ladies who despised her.

Long since he had told her the story of Arthur Beaupre's love and death, and her warmest sympathy had been excited for the unlucky young pair; but the De Gretton episode was to her altogether inconsistent and inexplicable.

"My dear Nettie, the whole thing was arranged for her; you do not understand," Mr. Singleton said, dismissing the subject thus summarily, because he felt that all explanation would be wasted on his simple betrothed. "When girls have no fortune, they must marry, even if their hearts are dead. Nora has simply accepted a shelter and a home—things that are necessary even in romantic grief."

He rather liked the ring of his speech, and thought he had settled things in the most delightfully prosaic and practical fashion; but the very practical words stirred Nettie to renewed protest.

"A home, a shelter!" she cried in a little glow of enthusiasm. "She need not break faith with the dead then. Why, Vance we could give her that!"

She looked so pretty with the generous flush, the earnest sparkle in her soft hazel eyes.

She was, if they had but known it Nora's better angel, pleading that this last avenue of escape might open to the doomed girl.

But Vance only kissed her, and tried to silence her with rather a forced jest—Nora had a home still; besides, what had they to offer her, compared with all that Lord de Gretton could give?

"But you will give her the choice, Vance," Nettie pleaded still, "when you see her, and tell her all? You will say also that she can find 'a shelter and a home' with us."

And, so pressed, he promised—and kept his word—to how little purpose the sorrowful sequel showed.

CHAPTER XIV.

IT was not until two days before his marriage that Vance found time and courage to fulfil his promise to Nettie, and pay his final visit to his step-father's house.

"Of course I run the risk of meeting that cad De Gretton, or worse still, of running against Cristine and my mother," the young fellow soliloquised, as he rapped at the door. "But I must see Nora, if it is only once again—must bid my dear old playfellow good-bye; besides, there is my promise. We must offer the hospitality of an attic to our peeress-elect."

But he had so little hope this hospitality would be accepted that he had actually brought his wedding-present with him—a cheap trifle of a ring—an absurd item in the future Lady de Gretton's present list, but still something bought with money he had earned.

He smiled a little sadly, thinking how the old Nora would have valued such a gift.

He was lucky in the time of his coming.

The servant told him that Mrs. Bruce and Miss Singleton were out, but that Miss Bruce was in; and Vance's heart leaped with pleasure as he sent in his card.

But it was not the old Nora who received him; it was the same pale frozen creature who seemed to hold all pity at a distance.

Though she was perfectly composed and more beautiful than ever, there was a something in her face yet which made the young fellow's heart ache.

She brightened a little at sight of him, and promptly questioned him as to his whereabouts and means of living, which last had by this time become a profound mystery to Mr. Singleton's friends.

"Mrs. Bruce is so anxious about you Vance," she said, with gentle earnestness; and the gray eyes lost for a moment the strained far-away look that was so infinitely sad, "I wish you could let her know what you are doing, and set her mind at rest.'

"No harm, at least, Nora."

"If that I am sure; but still——"

"Would you care to know Nora?"

Vance crossed the room and stood by the tall velved-draped mantlepiece, looking down upon her as she sat in the high-backed chair, with the afternoon sun slanting in on the small dark head, the pale perfect face, the cream-white dress and the slender crossed hands, on one of which it found a thousand dazzling reflections in her suberb betrothal-ring.

How stately she looked in her delicate, high-bred beauty—how different from his little every-day Nettie!

And yet the man thanked Heaven, in his inmost heart, that Nettie never looked like that.

"Nora, would you care to hear a very dull prosaic story of my life as it is and as it is to be?"

"Yes."

The answer was brief enough; but there was no mistaking the pleased alacrity of the assent.

"The story is for your ear alone. You will repeat it to no one, even if it shocks you, until I give you leave?"

"It will not shock me—your news is good," she said, eyeing the dark face keenly. "And of course I will promise, if you wish it. But your mother?"

"My mother shall know all in time but not just yet. Listen, Nora, and I will tell you why."

She listened without one interruption while he told the full story of his life since he had left Nettleton; and even when he had reached the end she still sat with her great gray eyes fixed on his face, as though she were trying to read there something more.

"Are you shocked, after all, Nora?" Vance asked at last, a little hurt by her silence.

She looked up quickly then.

"No," she said, holding out both slim hands, speaking with a sort of passionate intensity—"no; I am very, very glad. It is strange work, Vance; but it is work."

"And pretty hard work too!" he interrupted with a slight grievance; but she did not seem to hear.

"With work, and love, you should be good and happy. Heaven grant that we may be both, dear Vance!"

Her step-brother stooped and kissed her, pitying the envied of all London with an intense and aching pity.

"I give you back your prayer, my dear kind Nora—Heaven make you happy!"

"No, no," she clung to him with sudden passion, a look of the wildest terror flitting across her white face. "Pray that I may be good, Vance; that is all I ever dare ask now. Sometimes my head is so confused, I fear——" she stopped short, startled perhaps by something in the young man's face, controlled herself by an effort, and went on quite calmly" "But you have something there, Vance—something you mean to show me—Nettie's picture I hope."

He had two things—Nettie's picture and the little pearl ring—which looked truly absurd beside Lord de Gretton's diamonds.

He presented the latter awkwardly enough, glad to get the ridiculous ceremony over.

But Nora looked at it until the tears rose in the large gray eyes, and a softer expression than he had seen on her face since Arthur Beaupre's death came to it then.

If he had but spoken then, while with that softened moment, he had urged Nettie's prayer, he might have saved her even then; but the golden moment passed, the opportunity slipped from him,

A carriage drove up to the door, and the servant announced Lady Olivia Blake.

Nora became herself again.

There was nothing for Vance to do but bow and withdraw.

Two days afterwards Nettie Clare and Vance Singleton were quietly married at a little suburban church, with Mrs. Clare and Jenny for the only witnesses.

Never was a more modest ceremony observed, never did happier pair join hands and hearts before the alter, or swear with more fervent faith to love and honor, to love and cherish, until death them should part.

Mrs. Clare, looking a pretty picture of matronly dignity in the gray silk dress and dainty lace bonnet that Nettie's nimble fingers had deftly put together, shed a few natural tears, but was, on the whole, serenely happy and content, while Jenny absolutely forgot to be ill and fretful for one whole long day, so delighted was she with the dignity of her bridesmaid's duties.

And Nettie?

Nettie, in her pretty white frock, with the orange-blossom wreath crowning her boyish curls, and the misty whiteness of her net veil hiding the shy sweet face—Nettie needed no splendor of point-lace, of sheeny satin, or glittering jewels, to make her as fair a bride as the sun ever shone upon, though the items of her costume had been chosen with a jealous thrift.

But, though the dress was muslin and the veil plain net, though Nettie laughingly protested that flowers should be her sole adornment, she did wear jewels and jewels of no small value, after all.

The day before the wedding, the day succeeding Vance's South Kensington visit, she had received a large and heavy parcel by private hand.

Opening it with eager curiosity—for Nettie's bridal presents had been but few—she saw an old-fashioned jewel-box mounted and clasped in silver.

How well her lover knew that box!

How clearly he saw what lay within, even before Nettie raised the lid!—the dark blue velvet slope, the moonlight glimmer of the three ropes of pearls.

Nora Bruce was bidding good-bye to her old life indeed when she parted with the one possession Cristine had always envied her, the one possession of which she had been most innocently proud.

They were her mother's jewels.

"Nora has sent you her most prized possession," said Vance abruptly, as Nettie turned to him with a little gasp, too bewildered and taken aback to speak while Jenny and Mrs. Clare pressed forward to examine the costly gift.

"But ought I to take them, Vance," she asked shyly—"jewels like these?"

"My dear she is weighed down with jewels. Nora has more than she will ever wear or care for."

"But her mother's jewels—surely she must prize them!" the girl said, in a tone, almost of distress. "If they had been any other jewels!"

"My dear Nettie, she could not give you Lord de Gretton's presents; these are her own," the young man answered a little brusquely, for he hated to think of the state to which his step-sister must have been wrought before this last sacrifice was made.

Nora had always been generous—the value of her gift was nothing; in her new state she could afford that and more.

But these had been a sort of fetish to the Nora of the old days.

She who would cheerfully strip herself of every other small possession lent these only with extreme reluctance.

It had always seemed to hurt her to see them glittering on Cristine's white neck and arms, as, at the time of the Nettleton balls, they not unfrequently did, for Miss Singleton admired the pretty jewels sincerely and what she admired or coveted she seldom failed to obtain.

Vance knew in his heart that, if Nora had been Arthur Beaupre's wife, she would have worn her mother's pearls at her own bridal and parted with them only at her daughter's; but now what did another link with the old life matter?

"There is a note too," Nettie said, flushing with pleasure as she read the few lines Nora had enclosed to give fresh value to her present. "Oh, read it, Vance; is it not kind?"

It was, the young man thought, as kind as it was brief—a last glimpse of the old Nora who was to be merged as Lady de Gretton so soon—a little praise of Vance, a fervent wish for his happiness, a promise of future friendship—that was all; but it brought the tears to Nettie's honest eyes and an uncomfortable dimness to her lover's.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

THE STOVE.—If the kitchen stove is cleansed out every night and made already to be lighted, a great deal of time may be saved the next morning.

SORE THROAT.—One of the best ways to cure sore throat is as follows: Wring a cloth out of salt and cold water, and keeping it quite wet bind tightly about the neck. Cover this with a dry cloth. It is best to use this remedy in the night.

NEW CLOTH.—A new kind of cloth is being made in Lyons from the down of hens, ducks and geese. Seven hundred and fifty grains of feathers make one square metre of a light and very warm waterproof cloth which can be dyed in all shades.

ELECTRICAL TIME.—It is reported that a Russian Jew, by birth and only nineteen years old, the son of a watch-maker has invented a watch that goes by electricity, and which is declared by the Professor of Physics at the University of St. Petersburg, to be an instrument of wonderful simplicity and value.

SAFETY ENVELOPE.—A safety envelope, to prevent tampering, has been devised. On the flap, the words, "Attempt to open" are printed with a double set of chemicals, the first impressed containing nutgalls, and the second green vitriol. If the flap be steamed or moistened in any way, the magic printing will appear.

ELECTRICITY.—The Government of France offers a prize of $10,000 for the discovery that shall enable electricity to be applied economically in any one of the following directions: As a source of heat, of light, of chemical action, of mechanical power, as a means of the transmission of intelligence or the treatment of disease, the prize being open to all nationalities and to be awarded in December, 1887.

SLEIGHING WITHOUT SNOW.—In a neighboring city a "coaster" on rollers is run on a circular track nearly 600 feet in length, and elevated about 21 feet at either end. A reporter who tried a trip says: "The descent is very rapid for about 200 feet, the grade growing less and less till it becomes level; then a gradual ascent takes place, carrying the car back to the point of departure, which is twenty-one feet high. The trip around the curve is accomplished in 10½ seconds, and the sensation is as if one was flying through the air."

PATENT CANNON BALL.—Krupp, the great German founder, has just taken out a patent on a flat-headed artillery projectile. The pointed projectiles, as is well known, are apt to deflect when striking iron plates or water at certain angles. The new projectile, slightly tapering at the butt, will not only pierce the plates all the more easily but is also calculated to hit the ironclads below the water line. In order that the resistance of the air against the flattened head may not impede the celerity of the projectile, the latter is provided with a pointed tin cap, filled with grease, which cap drops off on striking the object, and, greasing the head of the ball, facilitates its entrance.

Farm and Garden.

LOSS IN SHEEP.—A prominent statistician calculates that the country loses nearly 5,000,000 sheep each year, mostly on account of dogs. Exposure to storms and severe cold in the West kills a great many, and Southern thieves take some. Scab, footrot, paperskin, dysentery and 'scarcity of grass' are also destructive. These causes bar extension of flocks, and in some sections almost annihilate this otherwise profitable rural pursuit.

CARING FOR THE HORSE.—Never allow anyone to tickle your horse in the stable. The animal only feels the torment and does not understand the joke. Vicious habits are thus easily brought on. Never clean a horse in the stable; the dust fouls the crib and makes him loathe his food. Use the curry-comb lightly. When used roughly it is a source of great pain. Let the heels be well brushed out every night. Dirt if allowed to cake in, causes grease and sore heels.

THE FOWLS.—See that your poultry-houses have perfect ventilation, as it will soon be time to confine your fowls from the frigidity of winter. No matter how limited may be the number of birds thus confined, a poisonous gas will quickly form, and if there be no chance for it to escape freely, sickness or death soon ensues to the inmates that are compelled to breath the foul air. In cold weather, during the middle of each day, the fowl house should be thoroughly ventilated.

THE DIARY.—When you find a dairyman who pronounces winter dairying a failure the chances are that you have found one who does not make the greatest success of any kind of dairying. Any one with any skill at all should be able to make winter dairying pay and pay well, when its products sell at about double the price for which they sell in the summer, while it costs but little more to carry the cows through the winter in milk than dry. While there is some inconvenience about dairy work in the winter there are many very serious hindrances to summer dairying, such as hot weather, flies, etc., which are evoided.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 13, 1890.

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CONVERSATION.

Conversation is the alternate or mutual communication of thoughts, by speaking, to one another; which, though it must be granted, is not to be reduced to rule in every circumstance and condition of men and things, yet there are many advantageous hints that may be improved to render it agreeable, and to prevent the bad effects of its abuse.

First, there should be a certain politeness in conversation. This ingredient gains upon the affections of the hearer, it conciliates love, and recommends a person to company more than any other attainment, and is the best antidote to that reigning vice—envy, which cannot bear anyone of extraordinary parts; but is at a loss how to attack a polite conversation. And the greater anyone may be as to his talents for conversation, so much more should he study to improve in politeness. Extraordinary gifts do not entitle anyone to behave with incivility, but to treat all mankind with greater civilities, and we shall always find our interest in endeavoring to please, rather than to shine in conversation.

Secondly, conversation should be adapted to the taste, character, and present humor of the persons with whom we converse. This is the true effect of politeness; but it meets with many obstacles, where there is not found a large fund of good-nature and complaisance.

Thirdly, we must not force nature. Everyone ought to follow his natural talent in conversation, and to take care not to pass the bounds of his own knowledge and understanding. It is to a want of this caution that we sometimes see a man of merit in other particulars belonging to his station, appear like a coxcomb, and hear a man of genius talk like a fool.

Avoid disputes as much as possible. When it is out of your power to prevent a debate, enter the lists coolly; give your reasons with conciseness and modesty. This will recommend you to the hearers, and furnish you with a good retreat in case of a pinching argument. For he that does not deliver his opinion in a dogmatical and conceited way, may, with a good grace, say, "I am never positive, and am now glad to be better informed," when he cannot proceed in an argument.

Thus the disciples of Socrates were wont to reason, who made it a rule scarce to affirm anything, to prevent their being caught in an absurdity; and seemed only to desire information from the man whom they were endeavoring to bring over to their opinion. He that contends for the honor of victory alone, cannot make a more false step, or give his antagonist a greater advantage over him, than falling into a passion. Nothing can be more ridiculous or unjust than to be angry with another because he is not of our opinion. If he is not endowed with the same gifts of nature and education as we are, it is our duty to be thankful for these abilities; but it is wrong to be angry with one who ought rather to be the object of pity.

Nothing can be more silly than the pleasure some people take in what they call speaking their minds. A man of this turn of mind will not scruple to say a rude thing for the mere pleasure of saying it; when an opposite behavior, quite as innocent, might have preserved his friend, or made his fortune.

Lastly, as we are told by the highest authority, "That evil communication corrupts good manners," so there is a something in conversation that can never be learnt but in the company of the polite. The virtues of men are enticing, as well as their vices.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A WRITER in a Providence paper, referring to the efficacy of the balsamic odor of pine for weak lungs, makes this suggestion: Very probably the day will come when pine and spruce pillows will be as frequent a household appurtenance in our bleak climate as the quinine bottle has been in the Southern and Western States.

—

A NEW YORK phrenologist has been trying to solve the problem of happy marriage by means of his art. In a lecture the other evening he declared that his investigations proved that men with bad tempers should marry women with mild manners, and *vice versa;* and that two of a color should never marry. Blondes should wed brunettes, the tall should wed themselves to the short, the lean to the stout, etc. As to the time of marriage, the professor was of opinion that the first things which engage a young man's attention are choosing a vocation and a wife.

—

TRAVELERS in Africa assert that the most certain cure for malarial fever is strong coffee, and that sufferers from the present malaria here would experience immediate relief from its use. It is known to be a wonderful disinfectant, and it is urged that although it possesses the exhilarating properties of other stimulants, no corresponding nervous prostration follows its use.

—

M. GOUSON, addressing an assemblage of art students in Paris, recently, said there is no such thing as "modern art," the laws of art being immutable. Hence, "realism," "idealism," "impressionism," and such like, are merely the diseased symptoms of an uninformed individuality, which, forsaking the eternal rules of art, survives only in monstrosities, or utterly perishes.

—

A CHICAGOAN has invented a new means of locomotion which he calls a "railboat." He refuses, however, to make his invention known to the outside public further than to say that it is after the style of an iceboat; that he can fasten it to the tracks of a railroad, hoist the sails, and whirl along at a rate of speed which would surprise any one used to traveling on the fastest trains in the country.

—

THE Rothschilds own $400,000,000 of United States bonds, or nearly one-quarter of all the bonds that are out. They are said to have invested thus heavily, for the reason that the political and social systems of Europe are in an uncertain condition. Vanderbilt is still the largest American holder of United States bonds, though the amount in his name has decreased during the last year from $50,000,000 to $37,000,000. Mrs. A. T. Stewart has $30,000,000; and Mr. Flood, of California, $15,000,000.

—

MEDICINES are considered powerless in the treatment of obesity, but there are, says a writer in a medical journal, three methods by which a fat person can be reduced. The first and most important thing to be considered is the diet. All starchy or saccharine foods must be avoided; the amount of water must be reduced to a minimum, and regular daily exercise must be taken. Friction of the skin is another method of treating obesity, but the prime factors in the reduction of fat are a careful dietary and plenty of exercise.

—

IF it were not for the solemnity and gravity of the subject, disease might be compared to a sneaking tramp lurking close to the back door of a man's house, and trying to pop in and lay his hands on the nearest thing of value the moment opportunity came. But, without making this comparison, there is no doubt that many diseases can be kept out of our houses as we exclude the beggar and burglar. Typhoid fever, with all its Protean changes, may be kept in check. Boil all the water, and filter it afterwards; and boil all the milk consumed in the house. Then buy a disinfectant, and put a little down the sink night and morning, and that excludes typhoid. And as it is with typhoid, so it is with other illnesses—they ought to be prevented.

—

DR. DIO LEWIS, in his magazine, gives a rule for the cure of stammering which is certainly simple enough, and which the doctor says has cured three-fourths of all the cases he has treated. The stammerer is made to mark the time in his speech, just as it is ordinarily done in singing. At first he beats on every syllable. He should begin by reading one of the Psalms, striking the finger on the knee at every word. "Time can be marked," says the doctor, "by striking the finger on the knee, by hitting the thumb against the forefinger, or by moving the large toe in the boot." The writer believes the worst case of stuttering can be cured if the victim will read an hour every day, with thorough practice of this remedy, and observing the same in his conversation.

—

THE census report upon cereals shows, that for the census year of 1880, the total production of the six cereal grains in the United States amounted, in round numbers, to 2,698,000,000 bushels, an average of 58.8 bushels per head of the population, and an increase of upwards of 84 per cent. since 1870. It is an important fact in connection with this enormous increase that it was not chiefly due to the cultivation of new lands in the west and northwest, but was more largely due to gains in farming regions already occupied in 1870. The chief advance was in regions which have been some time in cultivation, and in lands ranging in value from $60 per acre upwards. Most of the grain of the United States is grown in regions where mixed farming is practiced, and on farms of moderate size.

—

A WRITER who has studied the planets, with a view to ascertaining the influence they have over people, claims that people never agree in marriage whose horoscopes are antagonistic, and among the Hindoos and some other nations, even to this day, the astrologer is consulted to determine whether there is a complete sympathy between the positions of the sun, moon, Venus and Mars in the respective nativities, and, if their relative positions are not found to agree, then the projected match is broken off. Women who have the sun or the Western angle afflicted by Uranus, Saturn or Mars at birth, should never enter wedlock. When they do under these conditions, misfortune is certain to result. Venus should be free from the cross aspects of the malefic.

—

THE operations of a party of "spiritualistic" prospectors for gold, are thus described by an eye-witness: "The party consisted of nine men and four women, who formed in a circle round a hole in the ground and began a series of incantations and went through some movements. At one side a fire had been kindled, and above this hung a small iron pot, in which one of the women was brewing a mixture, all the time keeping up the same singing as the others. At 12 o'clock the pot was lifted from the fire and its contents thrown into the hole, and then the men fell to work digging with all their might, while the women gathered around the fire and chatted. The men worked until four o'clock, and then hid their tools and the iron pot in a hollow tree near by and started for their homes." This occurred on the outskirts of Elmira, N. Y.

—

THE social crusade against the venerable superstition respecting the number thirteen has extended to France; and at Senlis the other day thirteen lawyers solemnly met together at the Hotel du Grand Cerf and demolished a dinner of thirteen courses, for which they each paid thirteen francs. Prince Napolean's private experiments in this direction some time ago got him into bad odor; for, with characteristic perversity, he used to invite twelve friends to sup with him every Good Friday, to the no small scandal of the orthodox. A less aggressive attempt to establish common sense ideas on the subject, however, meet with more success. At present the prevalence of the superstition causes a considerable amount of positive inconvenience in France; and, according to a prominent Paris paper, there are still in that city some streets in which, owing to the timidity of the inhabitants, 12½ does duty instead of 13.

—

A WRITER in a London paper thus hints at a dark future for the British Empire: "When I say that the future unity of the empire is in danger, it is not to be inferred that there is unity now. The fact is, that under the hap-hazard way in which, colonially, we have been drifting for many years past, all our colonies stand to us now in the relation of dependencies, and not in that of integral parts of the empire. We must not deceive ourselves, therefore, as to our being a united empire in any sense worthy of the term—in the sense, for instance, in which America, or even France and Russia, are empires. Drifting along as we do now, our children will wake up some morning to find from the telegrams of their day that some leading colony or group has just so acted as to remove at last the lingering disguise. Regrets there may be all around for what has become the inevitable; but none the less, the grandest of empires, as well as the most promising for the world's good, will, by our amazing indifference, have collapsed in our hands."

THE ROSE.

BY A. C.

Pensive and sad, with soul oppress'd,
I wander'd through the glade;
Since sunshine from my heart had flown,
I sought the gloomy shade.

A perfume-laden crimson rose,
Waved gently in the wind;
Its beauty and its fragrance cheered
The sadness of my mind.

I plucked it wet with morning dew;
Its fragrance sweet inhaled;
And press'd it to my throbbing heart,
That love's coyness bewail'd.

And as upon my heaving breast,
The perfumed flower lay,
Love saw it on my bosom rest,
Careering by that way.

Its beauty and its perfume charm'd
The senses of the youth;
He begg'd the rose with tearful eye,
Emblem of love and truth.

Long did he plead for that sweet rose;
With it I would not part.
But though I kept the fragrant flow'r,
I gave to him my heart.

The Heirloom.

BY BLAKE PAXSON

THE pearl cross was an heirloom. Etta wore it the first time I ever saw her, and I noticed its pure beauty as it rested upon a knot of deep blue ribbons at her throat.

I think I loved Etta Raymond the first hour in which I met her at a small social gathering my Aunt Hilda gave in honor of my return from a long absence on business.

When the party was over, aunt told me that Miss Raymond was the niece of a new comer in our town, a retired clergyman, who had taken a cottage very near our own.

Had she been a very fine lady, I might never have drawn her into my heart, as I did very soon.

But she was a sweet, loving girl, possessing no worldly wealth, and we met on terms of equality.

I was an orphan, who owed education, care, everything, to my aunt, who had an income so very narrow, that it must have cost her many acts of self denial to support me.

But the time I met Etta Raymond, I had obtained a good situation in a commercial house, and was putting all my spare funds into my aunt's keeping for her own comfort.

I had been absent more than a year on business for the firm, and was enjoying a vacation of a month's duration, when I met, wooed, and won Etta Raymond.

I courted her with all my own heart, and when she shyly acknowledged she loved me, my cup of happiness was full.

Her uncle, when I placed my worldly prospects before him, was adverse to an immediate marriage, but gave a hearty consent to our engagement.

How the time sped away!

How much of it we spent side by side in that happy summer!

Our home was too far from the great metropolis for me to make flying visits there, but after I returned to my business duties, Etta and I entered upon a regular correspondence, and in one of her letters she wrote to me—

"Addie Wharton has come home, and called upon your aunt while I was there."

Addie Wharton was the only child of the rich man of our town, a spoiled darling of fortune from her cradle.

I had known her from boyhood, so I read with interest what followed.

"She invited me to a party given to celebrate her birthday. The next day Miss Wharton called upon me, and offered me a large sum for my cross. Why, I would as soon sell my mother's picture as her cross. It has been an heirloom descending from mother to daughter, for more than a hundred years. Miss Wharton failed to see any reason for my indignant refusal. When she left, she told me any time I wanted to sell it she would buy it."

I smiled at Etta's indignation, picturing to myself Addie's purse-proud insolence.

A year passed, during which I kept closely at my post in the counting-house, having responsibilities and duties which kept me busy far into the night.

As summer drew near, I was troubled by frequent attacks of vertigo, and my eyes would grow dim over my writing, so that I looked forward to my month's vacation as a much-needed rest as well as pleasure.

To my great disappointment, it was postponed until September, and I was really sick when at last I packed my trunk and took the train for home.

Before I saw Etta I was prostrated by an attack of fever that threatened my life, depriving me of consciousness for weeks.

When I recovered there fell upon me a blow that caused a dangerous relapse—I was blind.

Our doctor said, hopelessly, incurably blind!

It was impossible for many bitter months for me to feel resigned or patient.

I prayed to die, rather than to live in my youth and strength a burden upon a weak and aged woman.

My gifts to my aunt were melting away fast under the expenses of sickness, and there was only her own small income for our support.

But for Etta I believe I should have taken my own life in those dark, despairing days.

But my Etta was a very angel of comfort.

She refused to accept my offered release from her engagement, and actually proposed an immediate marriage, and emigration to the city, where she was sure she could find work.

Every day, as I sat in our tiny sitting-room, helpless and idle, Etta came to me, pressing her soft lips upon my eyes, and whispering words of comfort.

If the weather was fine we walked out, Etta leading me to retired spots, away from the kindly eyes of our old neighbors.

But I mourned for my future.

What was life to be to me?

I must learn all over some new pursuit to win bread or depend upon pitying charity.

I was well again and strong, and every drop of my young blood was in revolt at my enforced idleness.

At Christmas time, Mr. Raymond's only son came for a visit.

I had heard of Albert Raymond from my aunt.

From his mother he inherited a fortune, and he had loved Etta.

Because of her refusal to be his wife he had gone abroad, where he was adding to his heritage by successful speculations.

I was prepared to be jealous of Albert Raymond, for Etta always spoke kindly of him, giving him warm sisterly affection.

But after he came, though he was cordially pleasant with me, I hated him.

Before he had been home a week I knew that he and Etta had some secret between them.

I could grope my way by that time to several of the neighboring houses, and was often Etta's visitor, as she had been mine.

More than once, coming across the garden, I could hear Etta and Albert conversing in an animated, eager tone.

To stop abruptly the moment I appeared, or awkwardly to introduce general subjects I was sure were not the subjects of the original conversation.

A visitor came to Mr. Raymond's, a friend of Albert's, and Etta insisted upon our inviting him to the cottage.

He was a gruff-spoken man, and talked incessantly of my affliction.

Knowing how I shrank from any conversation, from any sympathy upon this subject, Etta had always delicately led all such talk away from it.

But, to my surprise, she encouraged this stranger, wrung from me every symptom, both preceding and during my illness.

When he went away, she accompanied him, though I offered to escort her home a little later.

It was a week after this when Albert had been away, when he returned suddenly.

Coming into the room he said—

"Etta it will be all right."

Then, seeing me, I am sure, he made some awkward explanation about investments.

But Etta grew very silent, and soon after I heard a pencil over paper.

Albert was writing.

A few moments later he left the room, and very soon Etta asked me to excuse her for a moment, and followed him.

I groped my way to the table, where I was sure I heard Albert writing.

Nothing there!

I felt about, till a small piece of paper was found close beside Etta's chair.

She had trusted to my blindness for its remaining undiscovered.

I was half-mad with jealous pain, and I groped my way to Mr. Raymond's study.

"Will you please read that to me?" I asked.

Without other answer he read—

"I must speak to you. Will wait in the summer house."

"Thank you!" I said.

"What is it?" he asked.

"The wrong note. I will find the other."

I went to the summer-house, softly as a thief, guarding my steps on the frozen ground. They were there, and I could hear Albert's voice. As I came near, I heard Etta—

"Oh, Albert, I will love you all my life for this."

She was crying too. I could tell that by her broken voice.

I turned away and went home.

It was a cold day and I was utterly miserable.

It was but natural Etta should turn from the blind lover who was but a disappointment, to the handsome young man of fortune, who had loved her so long.

I would try to give her up, not in anger, but tenderly.

But I could not.

Albert returned to C——, and every day Etta became dearer to me.

She gave me every hour she could spare from her duties to her uncle and his house, and she spoke of our future as surely to be passed together.

I had no courage to tell her I suspected her secret, and only in my lonely hours did I dwell upon the remembrance of Albert's visit.

The long winter wore away, the early spring was gone, and when May blossoms were bursting Etta came one morning to see me.

"Do you remember Dr. Sanderson?" she asked.

"Your cousin's friend?"

"Yes. He is a great oculist"

My heart seemed to stand still.

"He came solely to see you, and he warned us that we must give you no exciting hope for some months. Perfect tranquility, he told us, was his great hope for the recovery of your sight."

"Recovery of my sight!" I cried. "He thinks that possible?"

"He thinks it more than possible. If you improved in strength as you have done, he was certain he could successively operate this month."

I could not speak.

Very gently Etta told me of the cousin's kindness.

He had gone to the city solely to find this doctor, who was no more his friend than he was a friend of any other patient.

He had brought him to see me; and then burdened my Etta with his secret instructions.

Even Mr. Raymond and aunt were ignorant of his loving conspiracy.

It humiliated me to think of the spying part I had taken, the unworthy construction I had placed upon Etta's outburst of gratitude. But she should never know I had doubted her, even for an hour.

"Tell me," I said, "when this doctor will come again."

"He is here, waiting to see you."

He came in soon after, and there was no reluctance then in my answers to his searching questions.

He examined my eyes closely and gave me a promise of sight.

"God willing," he said, reverently, "you shall see again in less than two months."

And he kept his promise.

After the operation, he gave strict directions for bandaging and confinement in a dark room, till at the end of six long weeks he came again, and let me see once more the blessed daylight, and Etta's face.

From that hour I gained hope and courage again, and when my eyes were perfectly restored, returned to London.

I was expressly forbidden to resume my old duties, but the firm gave me a position and a good salary.

Etta waited another year for me.

It was not until we had been married over a year that Etta asked me one day if I could spare her one hundred pounds.

"Certainly," I replied.

"Do you wonder what I want with so much money?" she asked.

I did wonder for we had no secret in our life.

"I will tell you," she said. "I want to buy back my pearl cross."

"You sold that!" I cried. "I thought you valued that above all your possessions."

"But not above your eyesight. Dr. Sanderson was paid one hundred pounds for the operation."

"Etta!"

"That was part of our secret. Albert would have given me the money, but I would not let you owe your sight to anyone save me. So he took my cross and sold it. The man who bought it agreed to keep it for a time for me, and to-day Albert told me he could get it again."

I shall always think the cross had never been out of Albert's possession, and he was too delicate to give it again to Etta.

But he was on a wedding tour, and he gave his cousin the opportunity to redeem the heirloom.

My wife wears the pearl cross whenever she is in gala dress.

I never see it upon her fair throat but my heart swells in loving gratitude to the faithful woman who sacrificed it—the dearest treasure she owned—for me, to restore to me the lost blessing of sight.

Always too Late.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

PRISCILLA who often wondered why it had been necessary to name her after her dead-and-gone great-grandaunt was growing up into a fine young woman.

She was sixteen, and tall at that.

Her cousin, Tomlinson Perrybrook, then five-and-twenty, made up his mind to marry her, if he could get her, since, in his estimation, she was the prettiest, best and sweetest little darling living.

But she was only sixteen.

He could say nothing yet.

He would wait until she was seventeen, and then speak.

Then Tomlinson Perrybrook, having made up his mind, quietly went back to his occupation which was what he called "improving his place."

He laid out new paths, planted new trees, improved the garden, and gave the parlor a fine frescoed wall and ceiling, a new Persian carpet, and velvet furniture.

Meanwhile, he said nothing to Priscilla; having not the slightest doubt that she liked him and would say "Yes" whenever he said "Will you?"

Priscilla did like him.

She was secretly a good deal in love with him, and very much hurt that he did not make love to her.

Everyone in the house knew this, except Tomlinson himself.

He was waiting for the seventeenth birthday.

Before that time, Priscilla went to London to pay a visit.

There, at the house of a fashionable relative, she met a fashionable young man, who fell desperately in love with her.

In her heart, Priscilla wished that her Cousin Tomlinson had been in his place; but, as far as she knew, her Cousin Tomlinson had no more than cousinly affection for her.

Consequently, feeling that her youth was waning with the approach of her seventeenth birth-day, she accepted her first offer and came home to tell her father an mother what she had done.

They, in turn told Cousin Tomlinson, who having contrived to hide his emotion, escaped from them as soon as possible, and went home to shut himself up in the frescoed parlor he had furnished for unconscious Priscilla and cry like a girl.

Life seemed at an end to the young man now this horrible thing had happened to him, and he wished he had asked the girl to decide his fate for him before she left her peaceful country home for the temptations of the city.

Even then, however, he could not quite see how he could have done this, since he had quite resolved to wait until the seventeenth birthday was past.

There was nothing for it now but to get over his misery as well as he could, and he congratulated his cousin in a very pretty choice of words, and went away to distract his mind by travel.

He resolved not to return until the end of November.

This was in May.

In June his aunt, Priscilla's mother, wrote to him.

One of the paragraphs of the letter contained a tremendous piece of news.

It was this—

"I am sorry to tell you dear nephew, that Priscilla has quarrelled with the gentleman she was to marry, and that the affair is quite broken off so that she has given him back his ring. Of course such events are unpleasant, though we are glad to keep our girl a little longer. Mr. Dinwiddie was silly enough to be jealous without reason."

Priscilla was free again.

Cousin Tomlinson's spirits arose.

The frescoed parlor arose before his imagination, with Priscilla on one side of the grate and he upon the other, in twin armchairs.

He saw her driving the little pony phaeton he intended to buy for her down to the broad path leading from the house to the gate, and he was just three days distance from home, and a woman whose heart has just been hurt is always ready to accept a salve for it in the shape of a new lover as we all know.

It would be well for him to return home and exhibit himself as Priscilla's adorer in this moment of maiden humiliation.

But this young men liked to carry out the plans he had formed for himself.

He had said that he would travel until November, and it seemed proper to do so; consequently, he proceeded on his journey.

Now Priscilla, who had not loved her lover, but only been pleased by his love for her, and thought a good deal about Tomlinson, whose woebegone face had given her a notion of the truth the day he called to bid her adieu, before he set off upon his journey, and she had actually purposely made her lover quarrel with her, and broken off her match, on his account.

"Tell my cousin, mamma," she had said and mamma had written.

But when Tomlinson made no response, Priscilla grew angry; when he did not return, or even write to her, angrier yet.

At last, when June, July, August, September and October had passed, she began to confess that she was an idiot to throw a true heart for one that had no love for her, and that Tomlinson had worn a long face for some other reason than her engagement.

The consequence was that when exactly on the twenty-third of November, as he had resolved in the first place, Tomlinson returned home, and to lose no time hurried to his aunt's as soon as he had made himself presentable with the firm intention of proposing to Priscilla that very evening, he stood aghast at the door of the parlor before a very pretty picture that dissolved before his gaze.

His cousin Priscilla, with a gentleman's arm around her waist.

He retreated to his aunt.

"Who is that?" he asked pointing to the parlor.

"Mr. Dinwiddie," said his aunt."

"I thought you told me——" began poor Tomlinson.

"Only a lover's quarrel, after all," said the aunt smilingly, and quite unaware of Tomlinson's anguish. "They've made it up beautifully."

"They seem to have done so," said Tomlinson, remembering the dissolving view.

He went away shortly after, and left his compliments for his cousin.

Miss Priscilla married Mr. Dinwiddie this time, and really grew to love him; but there was something charming about her Cousin Tomlinson—erect as a poplar, and prim as a Quaker, which was exceedingly to her taste.

His little pink mouth, and narrow, well-drawn eyebrows were very pretty.

His hair was always parted properly.

There was no dust on his coat.

She sometimes contrasted him to her husband, and wished that Heaven had given her such a man, but no one ever guessed it, and the poor young lady felt very much ashamed of the silly secret hidden in her breast.

She was in all respects a good wife, and resolutely set herself to banishing her cousin's image from her breast.

She believed herself to have succeeded when ten years had gone by, but Tomlinson was still a bachelor, and still kept the room he secretly called Priscilla's parlor, as a sort of secret hiding-place, where he went at times very late in the evening with a flat candlestick to bewail his single blessedness and indulge in retrospection.

But a change was at hand.

Mr. Dinwiddie, who was fond of horses, bought a fine, spirited creature in the morning, and rode him out in the afternoon.

That night Priscilla kept dinner waiting long—indeed for ever; no one ever ate that dinner, for in the ghostly moonlight, as she sat at her window, she saw her husband's horse rush past like some black phantom without his rider.

The poor fellow lay three miles back upon the lonely road, prone on his face, stone dead.

And so Priscilla at twenty-seven was a widow.

As time passed, and her grief softened, she certainly looked very well in her cap.

Tomlinson thought so, so did Mr. Wincher, who settled her husband's property.

This time Tomlinson made up his mind promptly.

Of course it would be indecorous to intrude upon a widow's grief with words of love.

He would wait a year for decency, and one month over for good measure.

The year and one month would bring them to December 24th, 18—.

He would propose on the evening of December 24th.

He wrote the date down in his note-book, and counted the days as a girl does those between the present and her first ball.

Meanwhile he made no signs and kept away, and Mr. Wincher, being Mrs. Dinwiddie's legal gentleman, found it necessary to call—on business very often.

The year tottered away.

The month after it waxed and waned.

Once or twice when they met by chance, something in Tomlinson's eyes had revived old fancies in the widow's heart.

But at the end of the year she remembered that he had not so much as called once.

She gave a little sigh, and looked in the glass.

"Twenty-seven is not seventeen," she said, as she pinned on her first white collar, and tied a little white crape bow. "I'm sure, at least, that Tomlinson used to think me very pretty."

Just then a servant came to tell her that Mr. Wincher had called about a piece of land.

On the twenty-fourth of December, 18—, at half-past seven in the evening, as he had decided, Tomlinson Perrybrook, just thirty-six, dressed himself with much care, and observed, with some annoyance, that a bald spot as big as a shilling interfered with the straightness of the back parting of his hair.

Buttoning a pair of pearl-colored kid-gloves, he betook himself to his cousin's residence.

He rang the bell, the girl answered it, and took in his card.

She returned to beg that he would wait a few moments.

Tomlinson waited half an hour.

Then a jubilant gentleman came flying out of the parlor, and shook hands with him.

It was Mr. Wincher whom he knew very well.

"We'll go in and see her in a moment, my dear fellow," he said, in a whisper. "She's a little agitated. Ladies always are on such occasions. We'll leave her to herself a while."

"Occasion—what occasion?" asked Tomlinson.

"You haven't suspected me, then?" Wincher said. "She has just promised to make me happy by becoming Mrs. Wincher."

Again Tomlinson, with a woeful aspect, uttered congratulations.

Again Mrs. Dinwiddie gave a little sigh and drove away a little thought.

She was married to Mr. Wincher in the spring, and there was no sudden dissolution of the marriage, for Mr. Wincher lived thirty years, which, for a gentleman who was forty-eight on his wedding-day, was not doing so badly.

He died of something with an exceedingly long name; and having been very kind indeed to his wife, she shed a great many bitter tears and felt lonely.

She was fifty-eight now, and had no children.

The second widow's cap and crape veil shaded the face of an elderly woman, but she had grown round and had a bloom in her cheeks, few grey hairs, and a splendid set of false teeth.

When she had been a widow six months, Tomlinson Perrybrook, an old bachelor of sixty-five, utterly bald and grown woefully thin, sat over his solitary fire.

"It is queer how old fancies hang on," he said to himself.

"I suppose I could have any beautiful young girl I chose to propose to," (an old bachelor always believes that, and the older he grows and the uglier he gets, the stronger this strange hallucination becomes.) "But I am fonder of Priscilla than any of them.

"She is changed, of course; not pretty now, and I suppose other men think her an old woman; but she's a darling yet, and if I can get her to marry a third time and come here and live in the old house I made ready for her when she was seventeen, the end of my life will be its happiest, and, God bless her! I'll try my best to make her happy too."

Then he went to his desk and looked at a bit of ribbon she had dropped from her hair the day she was first a bride, and that he had saved all these years, and kissed it; and taking his cane (he had already had a twinge or two of rheumatism,) went to call upon his cousin Priscilla.

Portly and rosy, she sat knitting at her fire, neatly clad in widow's weeds.

Opposite her sat a stout gentleman, perhaps two or three years her junior.

"This is my next door neighbor, Mr. Packer, Cousin Tomlinson," she said.

Tomlinson bowed—so did Mr. P.

"Any relation of Mrs. Wincher's I'm delighted to know, I'm sure," he said with great emphasis; but he did not go.

It is etiquette for one caller to leave soon after the arrival of another. Cousin Tomlinson knew, but perhaps Mr. Packer did not.

At all events he sat and sat, and talked and talked, until Tomlinson, rising, said—

"Cousin Priscilla, will you see me to the door? I've a word to say to you."

She smiled, and went out into the hall with him.

He drew the door shut.

"He pays long calls, I see," he said, indicating Mr. Packer.

Something like a blush mounted to her face.

"Perhaps he thinks he has a right to do so," she said.

"I'm glad you called to-night; for when a woman of my age takes such a step, she don't like to break it to her friends herself.

"You must do it for me, cousin. You must mention that I am engaged to Mr. Packer.

"He is a worthy man, and respects me very much, and has fourteen motherless children, and our estates join, and I am lonesome—oh, so lonesome! And when people at our time of life do this sort of thing, what is the use of delay? I shall, of course, not marry before the year is out; but then——"

Poor Tomlinson, he sat down on a hall-chair, and excused the act by speaking of his late attack of rheumatism.

Then he added, *apropos* of her late words—

"Yes, yes, delays are dangerous!"

And then he said very softly—

"Well, well! Good-bye, Cousin Priscilla! Good-bye!"

And he held her hand longer than he had ever held it before, and for the last time in his life, and went away down the long gravel path.

She looked after him.

"He's an old man now, God bless him," she said; "but how trim and straight he is."

Then the thought that had haunted all her life flashed into her heart for one instant, and warmed it back to youth.

"Ah, no fool like an old fool," she said, and went back to Mr. Packer, who had meanwhile refreshed himself with a long nap with his head against the paper, and burst out of it with confused apologies.

Mr. Packer outlived his wife, and Mr. Tomlinson died before she did.

He never made up his mind about her any more; but I often wonder how such things are fixed in the other world.

Never Again.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

"YOU'RE a fool for your pains, sir!"

That was the only sentence the parrot could utter.

But she was a pretty, cunning bird, and Jenny Selwyn thought the world of her, because she was a gift from her lover.

Now Dick Heath was Jennie's lover, a fine, well-to-do young barrister, and the handsomest man in town.

Dick had but one great fault—he was prone to jealousy, and this fault caused him a great deal of needless trouble.

The summer time of his courtship was more than once overcast with clouds, in consequence of Dick's insane passion.

Jenny was a pretty creature truly, and had scores of admirers, but she was as true and tender as she was good and beautiful.

Dick had won her heart, and from henceforth no other man had any claim upon her.

But poor Dick could not bring himself to believe this, and if his charmer chanced to smile or speak a pleasant word to any other gentleman, he felt himself bitterly injured, and often reproached the innocent girl in the most unmanly manner.

But Jenny loved her jealous bear, and a woman will bear a great deal from the man she loves.

She did her best to soothe him, and hoped that time would cure him of his disagreeable fault.

By-and-bye they became engaged, and the wedding-day was appointed, and in honor of the occasion Dick presented his affianced with two gifts—a handsome and very expensive engagement ring, and the cunning green parrot.

Of course Jenny was much delighted, and kissed the parrot's glossy wings, whereupon Dick kissed her, and Poll, growing indignant, shrieked fiercely—

"You're a fool for your pains, sir!"

But the engagement ring was a marvel—a curious, unique affair, after the order of Marie Antoinette's talisman—a coiled serpent of red Indian gold, every tiny scale a flashing gem, and the eyes two gleaming diamonds.

There were only two at the jeweler's.

One Dick purchased at an extravagant price, and the other one was bespoken.

Of course Dick did not care to inquire by whom.

Jenny was much pleased and flattered when this quaint and costly jewel was put upon her slender finger, and loved her handsome lover all the more for his extravagance, though she chided him in a charming, demure fashion for spending so much money, and said she should take great care of her costly ring, so they might have to sell it one day, if they got into difficulties, as married housekeepers seemed prone to do.

Whereupon Dick kissed her again, to the parrot's extreme disgust, and happy Jenny thought her troubles were all over.

Of course Dick would never be jealous.

The wedding-day came and went, the bridal tour was made, and then Dick and his pretty bride settled down in their own home, not quite to Jenny's satisfaction, however, for another of Dick's failings began to crop out.

He was extravagant in other matters as well as the choosing of his engagement ring.

The furniture, the dinner-set, the silver, the carpets, were all very expensive.

"It is always wiser to buy the best of everything, my love," said Dick, with a lofty, masculine wisdom, whenever Jenny ventured to remonstrate.

"Yes, I know, Dick, dear, when one has the money," responded Jenny, meekly.

"Oh, well, we shall get the money eventually, and all the debts shall be wiped out—don't you worry, pet."

But she did worry in her secret heart, and saw trouble in the future, and maybe the sale of her precious ring.

But she wore it every day on her slim finger, and always had a bright face when her husband came home.

Dick, careless of his debts, went to and from his office, day after day, as happy as a king.

One unlucky afternoon, however, he chanced to get out a couple of hours ahead of his usual time, and took a stroll down to hunt some pretty toy for baby—for Jenny was a mother by this time.

Sauntering along, and puffing at his Manilla, and taking note of the shop windows, a couple just before him all at once caught his eye.

He came to a dead halt, and stood staring.

It was Jenny, his wife—he knew her brown dress, and her hat, and her blonde curls—and her companion was Mr. Dubant, the young music-master.

A very ugly expression crept over Dick's handsome face, and he started forward in fierce pursuit.

But the pair had already turned the corner, and, changing his mind, the jealous husband turned his steps in the direction of his own home.

Baby's toy was forgotten, and poor Dick rushed on at a great pace, tortured by his miserable imaginings.

This Mr. Dubant had been a great admirer of Jenny's in the days of her girlhood, and several times since her marriage he had dropped in of an evening, and they had sung and played together.

And here they were out walking in his absence, and without his permission.

Dick was furiously jealous.

He hurried home, and his fears were confirmed.

His wife was out!

She went out about that time every day, the nursemaid told him.

That night the miserable man said nothing, feigning illness to satisfy Jenny's anxious inquiries as to what made him so moody and silent.

The next afternoon he determined to be on the watch again.

But after waiting an hour, and seeing no sign of the guilty couple, he made his way to Mr. Dubant's, with the intention of calling him to an account for what he had done.

The music master sat at his table, copying some music, when poor, jealous Dick entered, and on one finger of his white, shapely hand glittered a curious ring—his wife's own engagement ring, beyond all doubt.

It caught the husband's eyes in a minute, and threw him into an insane rage.

Without a moment's thought, or a word of explanation, he flew at the astonished music-master, and seizing him by the collar, proceeded to chastise him severely with a small cane he happened to have in his hand.

Mr. Dubant, fancying that he was in the hands of a madman, used his lungs lustily; but Dick kept his hold, and belabored him most unmercifully.

"Now, you scoundrel!" he panted at last, "see if you'll walk with my wife again! Give me that ring on your finger, do you hear? I'll kill you if you don't!"

By this time Mr. Dubant was seriously alarmed, and the moment his insane assailter loosened his hold, he darted into an adjoining room, and closed and locked the door.

Dick fumed and stormed for a few minutes, and then departed, eager to expend his remaining fury on his wife.

He reached his home at the same instant that she came up from an opposite direction.

She hastened to meet him as usual, but she flushed and looked somewhat embarrassed, and said—

"Oh, Dick, dear, I didn't look for you so soon."

"I suppose not," responded Dick, with bitter sarcasm. "Where have you been, madam?—where do you go every afternoon?"

Jenny looked up into his distorted face in wide-eyed surprise.

"Dick, what do you mean?" she faltered.

"Where's your engagement ring?" he demanded, savagely. "Let me see it."

She blushed rosy red now, and dropped her eyes.

"Dick, I'm sorry," she began. "I meant to tell you, but I hoped I should get it again——"

"Silence!" he thundered, "you base, false woman.

"Go out of my sight, or I shall forget you are the mother of my child. I never want to see you again."

He wheeled, choked with misery and passion, and strode away.

At nightfall, when he returned, Jenny and her babe were gone.

He sat down in the deserted sitting-room, sick with misery.

She had broken his heart and disgraced his name, and the best he could do would be to take a pistol and blow his brains out.

He started up, quite insane enough to carry this mad thought into action.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir," cried the parrot from her cage.

Somehow, the words arrested him.

He stood irresolute, pressing his hands to his hot, throbbing head.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir," cried Poll, again.

"Confound that bird," he stormed, and rushing across to the cage, he gave it a spiteful shake.

Something bright fell through the wires and rolled gleaming and tinkling to the floor.

He stooped and picked it up, scarcely knowing what he did, but at sight of it he gave a start.

It was Jenny's engagement ring.

"You're a fool for your pains, sir," repeated Poll, cocking her bright eye maliciously.

But a rat, tat, came at the front door, before bewildered Dick had time to get his breath.

He slipped the ring in his vest pocket, and went himself to answer the summons, with a very faint hope that it might be Jenny coming back.

But he confronted a pair of officers instead, armed with a warrant against him for assault and battery on Mr. Charles Dubant.

So he was taken into custody, and marched down to the station, to await his examination before the magistrate on the following morning.

In his gloomy, lonesome cell, the poor fellow sat down and listened to the dreary wind and dripping rain without.

His passion had spent itself, leaving him in a weak and miserable condition, and his mind was so dazed that he could scarcely determine who was to blame, himself or Jenny.

Presently, while he sat in his gloom and despair, he caught a sound of footsteps, light, tripping steps, that made every nerve in his body thrill.

The door opened and Jenny entered.

She had determined to be very angry with Dick, but at sight of his poor, miserable face, the tears overflowed her blue eyes, and she ran hastily to him and threw both arms round his neck.

"Oh, Dick," she sobbed, "how could you? And you promised me never to be jealous again!

"Dick, you can't tell how it hurts me to think you could doubt me—could think me bad, Dick—and I love you so. Why, dear, I meant to tell you all about it—I only wanted to get started first.

"You see, Dick, dear," still sobbing, and kissing him with every breath, "you would have things so expensive and the bills kept coming in so, and there was no money, so I thought I'd try to help a little.

"You won't be angry, Dick? It was Mr. Dubant who helped me, you see. He got me a place to teach music, and went with me, and introduced me, and I got such good pay, and I meant to tell you, only I was afraid you might object.

"Indeed, Dick, you've treated Mr. Dubant very badly, but he's willing to let it all pass.

"He came to see me at papa's, and told me about it, and said he was very mad at first, and had a warrant out for you, but it's all settled now, and you're to go home with me, dear.

"But, oh, Dick," she added, "what a foolish mistake you made about the ring. That was not mine you saw on Mr. Dubant's finger.

"I lost mine, Dick. I took it off to wash my hands, and laid it on the window sill, and I never saw it again. I'm sorry, Dick, but——"

He drew the ring from his pocket, and slipped it on his finger.

"I found it, Jenny," he said, commanding his voice by a great effort. "It fell from the parrot's cage. I am fool for my pains, as the bird said. Jenny, can you ever forgive me?"

"I forgave you as soon as I came in, dear, and saw your poor, miserable face," she answered, touching her soft lips to his cheek; "and I do trust, Dick, love, that this lesson will cure you of your one fault."

"I am cured, Jenny," he replied: "I shall never be jealous again!"

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Our Share.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

THERE was Sister Parthenia and her husband, and Brother Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, that never got married and never won't, and Walker and I, and we all took the big wagon and went over to Aunt Tabby's funeral, 'cause Aunt Tabby was dead and 'twas our duty.

We hitched the old grey mare and the old white horse to the big wagon, and we all of us got in—Sister Parenthia and her husband, and Brother Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, that never got married, and likely never wont, and Walker and I; an' Jack, the wagoner, he drove; and we all of us went to Aunt Tabby's funeral, and for to hear the will, 'cause we was all the relations she had, and 'twasn't likely but what she'd left us something; and if you have a few pounds left you, you like to get it, don't you?

That's what Parthenia and her husband, and Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, that never got married, and never won't, and Walker and I all remarked.

We hadn't been sociable with Aunt Tabby, no we hadn't, for some time,

We hadn't seen her for five years.

When we called, she sent us word she didn't care for no company.

'Twasn't our fault, you see.

Sometimes she'd look out o' winder, and say—

"I hain't dead yet; not ready to die today. What's more, I ain't a-dyin', so you might as well ha' saved your pains."

She hadn't no good temper, she hadn't. She was awful touchy and suspicious; that's what we used to say to each other.

But we was'nt going to bear no malice now, we wasn't; and we was all going to her funeral like Christmas.

Well Jack the wagoner he drove, and we went rumbletty-bumbletty over the road, and at last we came to the door and there we stopped.

Parthenia and her husband, and Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, what hasn't never married, and never will now and Walker and I; and there was that crusty Phœbe standing at the door, and we ups and says to her—

"We've heard that poor Aunt Tabby is dead."

And says she—

"Have you?"

And says we—

"What did the poor, dear, late, lamented decease die of?"

Says she—

"Of want of breath, like most folks, I suppose."

Says we—

"We've come to the poor, dear critter's funeral."

She says—

"Well, as you've come, you'll have to go in."

So we outs with our pocket-handkerchiefs, and we says, "Boo, hoo!" and we put 'em to our eyes, and we walks in one arter the other, and we says—

"Can we see the poor, dear late, lamented deceased?"

And says that crusty servant Phœbe—

"No, you can't," says she, "not just now. But you can go into the front up chamber and have your teas: it's all set out, and the teapot is on the hob, and you can help yourselves."

"Yes," says we "we don't need no waiting on, and we can look at the poor, dear, late, lamented deceased a great deal more comfortable after we've had our teas."

So upstairs we went.

And there was the table all set, and the tea on the hob, and nothing much else in the room but chairs and a tall wardrobe.

Then we all sat down and we all put our handkerchiefs in our pockets and we didn't boo hoo right out no more.

We just sat by and helped ourselves.

"Took the best bedstead down. I suppose," says Parthenia. "Used always to stand here."

"Put the deceased onto it, mebbe," said Adoniram's wife.

"Hope not," says Martha Jane Gloriana, "'cause I always reckoned on that best bedstead being left to me, and I don't want it to seem ghosty," says she.

"Don't know why she should be so unjudgmatical as to leave that great bedstead to a single party," says I.

And Parthenia's husband and Adoniram and Walker, they agreed.

Says Parthenia—

"Seems as if I wouldn't care too much for the bedstead as I would for the parlor chairs. I've set my mind on the parlor chairs and the sofa."

Says Adoniram's wife—

"Adoniram being the oldest, I s'posed they'd go to us."

Says I—

"I can't see why you should, Mrs. Adoniram: the last custard you sent the poor, dear, late, deceased, she said was flavored with something like p'ison a purpose."

"'Twasn't so," says Mrs. Adoniram. "I put peppermint into it instead of lemon-flavor, that's all. Mistakes does occur sometimes," says she.

"And what I want to know," says Adoniram, "is about the real estate; them other fiddlings may go to Jericho,"

And Parthenia's husband and Walker they chimed in, says they—

"Ain't it queer," says Gloriana, "that she should be dying about now and not saying nothing what she was going to do? It makes me all grave like to think of it. I wonder whether she looks natural,"

"If she looks spiteful, and mean and hateful she does," said Adoniram's wife.

"Well, she warn't fine-favored, to be sure," says Parthenia.

"More canter—sword-cut most," says I.

"And her eyes were crossed," said Adoniram's wife.

"No, they were cast," says I.

"One on 'em was crossed and one on 'em was cast," says Martha Jane Gloriana; "That's the way of it. One looked to her nose and one looked to her ear."

"And hain't she flappy ears," said Parthenia, "partly like a donkey when you see'd her with her cap off."

"I warn't no wonder she didn't get married," said Adoniram's wife.

"Didn't the best-looking gets married first, says Martha Jane Gloriana. "That I'll have you remember, Mrs. Adoniram."

"Nor them that tries the hardest," says Mrs. Adoniram."

"Oh yes sometimes when they run arter a man, and will have him," says Mary Jane Gloriana.

Says I—

"Think what a solemn occasion this is, and don't have no words till we know what's left us."

"P'r'aps we won't be left nothin'?" says Parthenia.

"Mebbe she'll leave all to the servant girl Phœbe," says Adoniram's wife.

"If she does, she's just as mean as dirt," says Gloriana.

"Well, she was," says Adoniram's wife.

"I don't say that," says I. "Tain't for me to speak against deceased parties, but if she was able in her last moments to do something spiteful, she would."

"Maybe she died insensible," says Gloriana.

"Let's hope so," said Adoniram's wife.

"If she didn't leave no will," says Parthenia, "why, how will things be divided?"

"Why," says I, "even to be sure, between you and your husband, and Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, what hain't got married yet, and Walker, and I."

"'Twouldn't be fair," said Adoniram's wife, "To give a singular woman as much as married folks; she hain't no responsibilities."

"She hain't nobody to take care of her neither and she'd orter have most," says Martha Jane Gloriana.

"Any way, the oldest ought to have most," said Adoniram's wife.

"We'll see what the law says about that," says Parthenia.

"Well, I reckon there ain't any will," says Parthenia's husband, "so let's talk it over. Now we orter have the land."

"Like to know why," says Adoniram.

"Yes, state your reasons," says Walker.

"I'll have the chairs and sofa, if I have to fight for 'em," says Parthenia.

"And I the best bedstead," says Martha Jane Gloriana.

"You shan't," says Adoniram's wife.

"Now my temper's up and I will," said Gloriana.

"I must and will have the parlor carpet," says I. "Mine's just worn out; and her black satin will do for mourning."

"I'm going to have the black satin," says Parthenia. "I tell you that."

"No, I will," says Gloriana.

"Not one of you durst touch it," says Parthenia. "It's mine."

And just then the awfullest thing happened.

The doors of the big wardrobe burst right open, and out walked Aunt Tabby.

She came right straight up to the table in her long white gown, and we shrieked and flew.

Down the stairs we went, some on our feet some on our hands—Parthenia and her husband, and Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, and Walker and I.

And when we got down into the garden, and picked ourselves up, we saw the window rise, and Aunt Tabby's head stick out of it.

"I ain't quite dead yet, you see," said she; "but I heard the report was about, and I thought I'd have a little fun. I shall wear the black satin myself yet awhile, and you needn't none of you come to my funeral when it does come off, because you won't none of you be in my will. Good-bye. Pleasant journey home."

So Jack he put the grey mare and the old horse to the wagon, and we all got in—Parthenia and her husband, and Adoniram and his wife, and Martha Jane Gloriana, that never wasn't married, and never won't be, now and Walker and I, and we all went home.

STRANGE TREES.—Dr. Nachtigal has described some curious trees of the region about Lake Chad in Africa. The butter tree bears a peculiar nut whose oil is much used as a substitute for butter; a leguminous tree which produces seeds from which a meal is made, which is an excellent food; while the wool tree has a fruit which bursts like the pods of cotton, and reveals a soft and lustrous mass of fibers, which may be used for a variety of purposes, such as stuffing cushions and mattresses.

THE life of the true man or woman is less like a glaring, lurid and startling meteor, [illegible] for a few moments, as it flies on its [illegible] course, but like the steady shining of the fixed star, which is [illegible] ever constant and ever [illegible]. No one has ever been able to compute the good effected by the true, benevolent and conscientious man or woman, nor the evil done by the opposite, like the streamlet, ever widening and deepening, in its flow to the ocean, blessing or cursing all future ages.

New Publications.

"The Pansy," edited by Mrs. G. R. Alden is a publication for boys and girls that is bound to please them. It is published weekly at 7 cents per number and contains stories, sketches, etc; accompanied by numerous pictures, all of the kind best calculated to please and instruct. Lothrop & Co. Boston, Publishers.

That very popular story, "One Summer," was particularly good of its kind, and now its author, Blanche Willis Howard, has followed up the excellent impression she made in the reading world by a new tale entitled, "Guenn, A Wave on the Breton Coast." Like its predecessor, it is limited in field and extent of character, but this is rather an advantage than otherwise, for by this means the writer has been able to concentrate her strength with more effect. The chief element, as might be expected, is love, but treated differently than is the rule. The character of Guenn, the fisher-girl, is a noble conception, as is the part of Thymert, the parish priest. Honor, the artist who completes the triad of leading roles, is more conventional than the others, though still possessing much individuality. In painting of scenery, the writer shows herself a cunning artist with the pen, and as a happy combination where good insight of the human heart waits upon power to express it, the book is worthy of high commendation. There are also initial-letters and tail-piece pictures scattered through the volume worthy of praise in their way. Osgood, Publisher, Boston. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price $1.75.

There is no good reason why history should not be made very interesting reading to all classes. As a rule, however, it partakes of such a solid character, that few save those of minds almost correspondingly solid, dare to approach, or engage in it with much pleasure. Young folks, and particularly boys, hardly care for history as usually presented, from this cause, but they will find something vastly different from the usual style of works on this subject in "A Narrative History of King Philip's War, and the Indian Troubles in New England," by Richard Markham. It is written in a pointed, entertaining way, that makes the perusal of the work most entertaining and attractive. It is well illustrated, and altogether makes a delightful [illegible] book. Lee, Mead & Co., New York Publishers. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price $2.00.

What we have said concerning the history of "King Philip's War," will apply to the "History of the War with Texas," by Horatio O. Ladd, A. M. There is nothing in the annals of our country around which more interesting and patriotic memories cluster than the affairs and circumstances, leading and incidental, to the Mexican War. The present book deals with the subject in the clearest and most satisfactory way we have ever seen it treated. By omitting unessential parts, the author has succeeded in putting the matter in brief space, while really rendering it from this condensation more entertaining and instructive. It is well illustrated, and nicely printed and bound. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, Publishers. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price $1.25.

Than "Her Second Love," Ashford Owen's latest novel just published, a better or more interesting love story is not to be found in print. It handles a delicate subject in a masterly manner, and lays bare the truest workings of a young girl's heart with a [illegible] ely [illegible] George Sand's, but [illegible] refuses an [illegible] for James Erskine after she is engaged to another man, and the major portion of the unusually bright novel is devoted to the development of that exciting love affair. It is published in a large square duodecimo volume, in uniform style with Mrs. Burnett's works, price fifty cents in paper cover, or bound in morocco cloth, price one dollar. T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

"Elsie's New Relations, What they Did, and How they Fared at Ion," is a sequel to "Grandmother Elsie," by the well known writer, Martha Finley. It is a domestic story that pictures home life in a very interesting way, and in an attractive series of incidents, illustrates a great many good points in conduct and morals, that both young and old would be the better for reading. It is more particularly, however, adapted for the former of both sexes, and parent or child will make a good investment in procuring it, the one for giving the other for getting. Neatly printed and bound. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. For sale by Porter & Coates. Price $1.25.

"Rosmoyne," a novel by the author of "Phillis," "Molly Bawn," etc., has been sent up by Lippincott & Co. Like all the works by this author, it is well worth reading. Paper backs. Price 25 cents.

MAGAZINES.

Lippincott's Magazine for December has a great variety of articles, all of which are readable, while several of them are remarkable for the novelty of the subjects, the vividness of the treatment, and the information contained in them. They are The Menhaden Fisheries; Doctor and Count Mattei, a renowned Italian charlatan; Studies from the Census, by Charles H. Fitch, a very instructive and suggestive paper; The Funeral of a Greek Statesman; The Modern Feeling for Nature; Women and Gowns; The Education of Nurses, etc. Miss Tincker's serial, The Jewel in the Lotus, is concluded in this number, but as it is published simultaneously in book form, and is certain to have a wide circulation, nothing further need be said of it here. The departments are likewise excellent. The special merit of *Lippincott's Magazine* is that it is always readable. J. B. Lippincott & Co., Publishers, Philadelphia.

The November *Magazine of American History* presents an exceptionally attractive table of contents. The leading article is entitled, The Last Cantonment of the main Continental Army of the Revolution. The second article is concerning The Treaty for which the Army Waited, by Theodore F. Dwight, Librarian of the State Department, Washington, with a fac-simile of the signatures of the original Treaty. We have also the conclusion of Hon. Charles Gayarre's Historical Sketch of Pierre and Jean Lafitte, the famous Smugglers of Louisiana; The Journey of Madame Godin, a thrilling story by Frank D. Y. Carpenter; General Houston's Indian Life, by Alfred M. Williams; the second chapter of the *Private Intelligence* Papers of Sir Henry Clinton, etc. The other departments are all admirably filled with entertaining and useful matter. Publication Office, 30 Lafayette Place, New York City.

John G. Whittier opens the Christmas *St. Nicholas* with an Indian legend told in verse, entitled How the Robin Came; and Louisa M. Alcott contributes the second half of her bright Christmas story, Sophie's Secret. Captain Mayne Reid's new and exciting serial, The Land of Fire, is also begun. Copiously and cleverly illustrated by Kelly is the highly original sketch by Charles Dudley Warner, called Fare in a Street-Car; Maggie's Dangerous Ride: the first of Prof. Boyesen's Tales of Two Continents, is begun. These, however, are only a hint of what is in it. Altogether it forms a rousing Christmas number of over a hundred pages of splendid stories, instructive sketches, beautiful pictures and poems, and fun for everybody. The Century Co., New York.

The Century Magazine for December contains a portrait of Peter Cooper, and Mrs. Susan N. Carter contributes an anecdotal paper which throws much light on Mr. Cooper's ideas of young women for skilled occupations. Other biographical papers in the same number are The Pretenders to the Throne of France, and George Fuller, with engraving of three of his best pictures. Dr. Charles Waldstein contributes an instructive illustrated paper on The Frieze of the Parthenon. An entertaining illustrated paper on Devonshire, is entitled The Fairest County in England; Echoes from the City of the Angels; H. H. closes her series of picturesque articles on Southern California. Prof. J. Rendel Harris, of John Hopkins University, writes of The Original Documents of the New Testament. In fiction the December *Century* is unusually good, as well as interesting. It offers parts of three serial stories, Bread Winners; and An Average Man, which will run through six numbers. Besides, it prints the conclusion of Henry James's novelette, The Impressions of a Cousin, and a refined and humorous short story, One Character. Poems are contributed by Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt and Andrew B. Saxton, and others. The various departments are also well filled and interesting. The Century Co., New York.

Our Little Ones and the Nursery for December is full of the best of reading and pictures for smaller children. Published at 36 Blomfield Street, Boston. $1.50 per year.

In the December *Manhattan*, which improves with every number, the poet, E. C. Stedman, has a fine poem The Old Picture-Dealer. As this is the 400th year since Raphael's birth. There is an article on Urbino, Raphael's birthplace, by Martha Carey, with admirable drawings by her husband. Other illustrated papers are A Corner of Acadia; New York in 1783, with views of the buildings existing then. Knickerbocker Eyes in Mexico is by Frederica Bartlett von Glumer, the heroine of Stedman's poem, The Diamond Wedding. Under the title The Maker of Many Books, Julian Hawthorne has a review, Anthony Trollope's Autobiography. There are two able papers devoted to Matthew Arnold, one on his Critical Writings, by Titus Munson Coan, the other on his Poetry by Joel Benton. The fiction consists of the concluding chapters of Hawthorne's Beatrix Randolph, and two chapters of Edgar Fawcett's Tinkling Cymbals. There are besides several good poems, etc., and the departments are all excellently edited. The Manhattan, New York.

NEW MUSIC.

Russell Bros., 126 Tremont St., Boston, music publishers, send us the following choice pieces. Instrumental: Moonlight Shadows, by Richard Stahl, and Coy Maiden. Vocal: Now the Day is Sinking Low, Sinking Song. As the Ingrate I Leave, Nay Pardon I Ask upon Bended Knee, Drinking Chorus and Duo. These and many selections from their Musical Library, a splendid Series of songs for mixed voice and female voices.

Little Annie is the daughter of one of our most prominent citizens. Yesterday she told us in her way, what a good medicine Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup was, as it had cured her of a very severe cold.

WE have, to a great extent, the power of prolonging our lives. Living by a rule and obeying nature's simple laws may seem very irksome to some people at first, but doing so soon becomes a habit and a pleasant habit, and one that tends to happiness, to comfort, and to length of days.

Our Young Folks.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SWAN.

BY SYLVIA A. MOSS.

MANY years ago, there lived in Flanders a wise and good king, who had but one child, and that a son named Oriant.

Now Oriant's mother was a selfish and wicked woman, and when on the death of her husband, Oriant succeeded to the throne, she wished him to marry some rich and high-born lady, who would bring additional wealth and honor to his kingdom and name.

Great indeed then was her displeasure when, as the king and his nobles rode to the chase one day, Oriant dismounted and sat by a fountain to rest.

A beautiful lady appeared before him, attended by four maids, a knight, and two men servants.

"I desire you to cease hunting in my domains," said she, "as I have given you no permission to hunt here."

Instantly all the worldly counsels of his mother were forgotten, and Oriant resolved to make this fair but unknown lady his wife, for he loved her with an affection far beyond any he had previously felt for any maiden however noble.

He courteously introduced himself, and added:

"I am king of this country, and may lawfully hunt where I please."

At this the attendant knight begged forgiveness for the lady, "for," said he, "she know you not."

This the king was quite ready to grant on condition that the lady would consent to become his wife, which, as she truly loved him, she was willing to promise.

He then conducted her to his palace, where the marriage took place with great splendor and ceremony.

Everybody except the king's mother was delighted with his choice, for not only was Beatrix beautiful and accomplished, but she was also kind-hearted.

"I am astonished and grieved," said his mother, "that you, who might have wedded with the noblest in the land, should choose to marry, against my wish, a woman of whose family history even you know nothing."

But when she saw she could not turn Oriant's heart or mind away from his wife, she feigned an affection for her that she did not feel.

A year passed happily away, and when the king was at last obliged to go the war, then being fought in one of the northern provinces, he left his beloved Beatrix in charge of his mother until he should return.

After a time six sons and a daughter were born to the queen.

These the king's mother hired a servant to destroy, and when in surprise he remarked that they all had silver chains about their necks, she answered—

"Yes, that is a sure sign they will all be thieves and murderers."

The servant started for a distant forest, but on the way repented of the deed he was designing to do, and left the children unharmed behind the wood.

Now it happened that near by lived an old man and his wife, and when they heard the children crying, the old man went forth to find them and brought them home.

"See," said he, "they all have silver chains about their necks. They must be children of a king."

The good people took care of the little ones, and they grew to be rosy and happy.

Meanwhile King Oriant had returned home from the wars, and had heard from his mother the most false and wicked stories that she could possibly invent.

She wished him to at once burn Beatrix, but the king did not in his heart believe the stories, and called a council of the wisest and best men in his kingdom.

They all advised him to treat her honorably.

This advice he readily accepted, and the years passed on.

One day a huntsman was riding through the wood near the hut of the old man who had cared for the children of the king.

This huntsman noticed that the children were all beautiful, and that they all wore silver chains.

He followed them home and asked the old man to relate their history.

This he would not consent to do, but having received assurance that no harm should befall them, he related all he knew.

Upon his return to Court the huntsman resolved to mention the fact to Oriant's mother.

Instantly she perceived they must be her son's children, and so said to the huntsman pretending that he would dispose of them at once, but as she assured him he would lose his own life.

Terrified, he agreed to do as she ordered, and hired two assassins to accompany him to the hut.

On their way they passed through a village where a woman had just been burnt for the murder of her child.

This event recalled the huntsman to his better self, and he resolved to spare the lives of the children.

When they reached the hut they found Helois, the children's old man having left, had accompanied him to a distant town to buy food.

The other six, however, were playing together near the borders of the forest.

When they saw the three men they began to cry, but being assured no harm should befall them if they allowed the men to take off their silver chains, they readily submitted.

No sooner had the chains been removed than the children became six swans who flew up into the air.

The huntsman carried the six chains to the king's mother, assuring her that all the children were dead, but that the seventh chain had been lost.

She ordered her goldsmith to make the chains into a cup.

This he proceeded to do, but finding when it was melted one chain would make two cups, he gave the other five chains into the hands of his wife, and sent one cup to the king's mother, while he kept the other himself.

All this time the unhappy Beatrix prayed that the truth might be made known to the king, and after a time Helois questioned the old man in regard to his birth, and then resolved to make his way to King Oriant and lay the whole matter before him.

The six swans had during this time lived in a lake in the forrest, where they were fed by Helois each day.

When Helois arrived at the Court of the king, a new danger threatened his mother Beatrix, but he told his story so nobly, and fought so desperately with the false knights, and so thoroughly exposed the wicked schemes of the king's mother, that even King Oriant was convinced that he at last knew the whole truth, and, embracing his beloved Beatrix, he, with tears, besought her to forgive him that he had ever seemed to doubt her.

The silver chains were at once procured from the goldsmith, and placed upon the necks of the swans, at which they all recovered their natural form except the one whose chain had been made into cups.

He was forced to retain his present state, at which he was very sad.

But Helois cheered him with assurance that he would watch carefully over his welfare.

The king's mother was sentenced to be burnt alive, and the king bestowed his kingdom upon Helois, who ruled long and wisely.

But one day he looked from the window and saw his brother swan coming, drawing after him a little boat.

Immediately Helois knew that some one was in want of a champion to defend certain rights.

He took leave of his father and mother and of all his friends, ordered his armor and his silver shield brought, entered the boat and was soon far away.

It happened that the Count of Arduennes wanted the dukedom of Bouillon, and in the reign of Otto I. of Germany, he brought grave charges against the duchess, whose husband was dead and who had no one to defend her rights.

The Count felt so sure of his power over her that in proof of what he had said he threw down his glove as a challenge to any knight who wished to engage in combat with him in favor of the rights of the duchess of Bouillon.

At this fateful moment the notes of a horn were heard in the direction of the Rhine, and hastening to the windows they saw a swan drawing a little boat. In the boat stood Helois clad in armor, and bearing before him a silver shield.

"Be of good cheer," whispered the duchess to her daughter, "I think yonder knight will save our duke and us, for he is the same knight I saw in my dreams of yesterday."

When Helois appeared before the emperor and inquired if any lady were in need of a champion, he was told the story of the duchess.

Turning toward her, he inquired, "Are you guilty or innocent?"

"Innocent," she firmly replied.

"Then," said Helois, "I will defend your honor with my life."

In full view of many knights and nobles and a crowd of spectators, Helois and the count fought.

At the first charge their lances were shivered, and they drew their swords.

The count perceiving Helois to be a brave knight, thus addressed him—

"Oh, noble knight of the swan, make peace with me, and I will give you my daughter in marriage. In due time you will rule over Ardennes and Bouillon."

Helois scorned this offer, and in the struggle that succeeded, killed his opponent.

The emperor received him as became a knight so noble, and the duchess thanked him in these words—

"Sir, you have restored to me my lands. I give them back to you with my daughter."

Helois was pleased to accept this offer on one condition, that it should never be asked of him from whom he descended, for from whence he came, for when that secret became known to his wife he must soon die.

What he desired was readily promised, and the marriage was solemnized with great pomp.

After this they departed for Bouillon, where for many years they lived in great happiness, having one lovely daughter whom they named Ida.

One day the duchess entreated Helois to tell her of his parentage, and from whence he came.

This he could not consent to do, and told her that if she asked him again, he must leave her forever.

The duchess then questioned him no more for six years, but people envious of Helois were not slow to remark that no one knew really who he was.

The duchess again entreated him to reveal to her the secret.

That, however, he would not do, knowing that it would cost him his life.

"I must part from you and my beloved child to-morrow," he said. "I will then take leave of the emperor, and you will see me [illegible]."

The duchess wept bitterly, and entreated him to remain.

Calling her daughter, they both implored him to stay; but of no avail.

Summoning his knights and nobles around him, he bade them all farewell.

Just then the swan appeared, drawing after him the little boat.

Helois entered and sailed away.

The duchess and her daughter hastened to the emperor, who used all his influence with Helois to induce him to remain, but of no avail.

He proceeded toward his father's palace as rapidly as possible, where he was received by all with great joy.

"But tell us, my son, with whom, and where have you spent these many years?" said Helois' mother.

"Let me rest until the morning," said he, "and I will relate to you all my adventures."

When the morning came, he called together all his friends, and related to them all that had occurred during his long absence.

When he had finished he announced his intention of entering a monastery that had been founded by his father, where apart from the world, he might repent of his sins.

He took with him many monks, and the monastery became known as a model home of religion and virtue in those days.

The father and mother of Helois could not endure the thought of parting from him again, and he ordered a castle built for them, overlooking the monastery.

In memory of his wife and daughter, this castle was modelled after the castle of Bouillon.

One night the queen dreamed that if the two silver cups were shown to the swan, he would at the same time recover his form.

This was accordingly done, and all happened as he had dreamed.

He received the name of Esmeri.

During all this time the duchess and her daughter were grieving for Helois.

The duchess sent Pietus, a trusted servant, to Jerusalem and Rome in search of him, but he could not be found.

On his return Pietus, with his attendants, passed through Ardennes, where they camped for the night.

In the morning Pietus was astonished to behold what seemed to be the Castle of Bouillon in the distance.

"Look!" he exclaimed, "we must be near home."

But upon reflection he knew this could not be true.

He therefore made inquiry at a village concerning the builder of the castle, and when told it was Helois, he was greatly pleased, for he felt that his journey had not been in vain.

He set out to visit the monastery, and Esmeri recognized him by his dress, as coming from Bouillon.

Helois received him courteously, and sent to the duchess a valuable ring, and to his daughter Ida, who had recently been married, many beautiful and costly gifts.

As soon as Pietus reached Bouillon, the wife and daughter of Helois resolved to set forth on a journey to visit him.

When they arrived at the monastery, he was very sick, but in a few days recovered sufficiently to see them, and the meeting was a joyous one.

Helois soon after died, and the duchess also died of grief, and was buried beside her husband.

Ida returned to her own home where she lived many years.

She was the mother of the famous Godfrey of Bouillon, and of his brother Baldwin.

Godfrey led the second and successful assault against Jerusalem in the first Crusade, and refused in his humility of spirit to be crowned as king.

It is related that just before the assault, a swan came and circled four times above his head, then flew toward Jerusalem where it settled upon one of the towers of the fortifications.

It was through this tower that the Crusaders entered the city.

WILLIAM H. VANDERBILT and Jay Gould have their valets stationed at the doors of their boxes at the Metropolitan Opera House, and visitors are only admitted by card.

An Enthusiastic Endorsement.

GORHAM, N. H., July 14, 1879.

GENTS.—Whatever you are, I don't know: but I thank the Lord and feel grateful to you to know that in this world of adulterated medicines there is one compound that proves as it is represented. I advertise to do and more. Four years ago I had a slight attack of palsy, which preserved me to such an extent that the east excitement would make me shake like the ague. Last May I was induced to try Hop Bitters. I used one bottle, but did not see any change; another did so change my nerves that they are now as steady as they ever were. It used to [illegible] write, but now my good [illegible] Now, if you conclude to manufacture as honest and good an article as you do, you will accomplish as much honest fortune, and confer the greatest blessing on your fellow-men that was ever conferred on mankind. TIM BURCH.

SMOKE AND SMOKERS.

IN the course of my travels up and down the earth I have blown clouds—"the white pigeons" of Sioux legends—with the natives of Hindostan and with the red Indian of the far west, with the Chinaman and Mexican, with the Kaffir and the negro, with Boer, Afrikander and Creole, with Turk and Egyptian, with Mormon and gentile, with Hindoo, Mohammedan, Buddhist, and idolater, with black and brown, red, yellow, and even pie-bald; and I must confess that some of the ideas of tobacco that I have encountered have been so pathetic in their aboriginal crudity that I could have wept for my innocent brother. But compassion is very often misplaced, and it is a good traveler's rule to reserve pearls for those who appreciate them. Thus, a native of India will not smoke your tobacco, even if he will take it at all, until he has mashed it up with molasses and musk.

Share the contents of your pouch with a red Indian, and the untutored child of the prairie will forthwith mix it with other vegetables to make it go further.

The Afrikander despises what you smoke; the Chinaman calls it hay.

For tastes in tobacco differ as much as tastes in personal beauty, and each thinks that which he is accustomed to the best.

The Boers grow and manufacture a tobacco of their own which is of such a detestable odor to civilized man that I remember during the Zulu war we used to tip the Kaffir or Afrikander drivers of mail carts not to smoke except during the halts at stages, and then always to leeward. It was no use offering them our superior article, for the dreadful Dutchmen scorned it as trash.

Equally odious is the ordinary tobacco of the Chinese.

The Boer stuff smells rank and green and acrid; but the Celestial has a heavy, clinging, clogging odor that suggests opium in the composition.

The South African leaf when ready for consumption looks like crumbled hay, with miscellaneous dead garden rubbish and the sweepings of a conservatory added. It is full of twigs and knots and threads of vegetable matter, and is of a general green-ish-gray tint.

The Chinese, on the other hand, is curiously soft; it lifts up in silky skeins of exquisitely fine hair like strands, and is of a deep chicory color, and resembles some vegetable fibre steeped in jaggery rather than tobacco leaf.

The Boer tobacco blows out of the pipe—it is so dry and vagrant; but the other pads down in the pipe close and firm, and the bowl has to be filled as lightly as possible in order to obtain any draft at all.

To smoke a pipe of the former is to scorch the tongue and to go about all day with the taste of Turkey rhubarb in your mouth; to venture on the latter is to enjoy a cool, highly aromatic pipe, with the subsequent penalty of giddiness and sick headache, as after a blundering administration of chloroform.

It requires only an effort of the stomach to return to Boer tobacco a second time; to return to Chinese a second time you must turn Chinaman.

The Asiatic, so far as my observation goes, never smoke his tobacco pure.

The simple leaf is too strong for him; and his taste for sweets leads him to mix it with sugar, molasses or honey, and—in the case of the luxurious, notably the young Mohammedan "swells"—to perfume and qualify the mixture with paste of roses and spices.

When ready for the pipe it looks like crude opium, a tenacious black amalgam, and when kindled gives out a faint, sickly odor, surprisingly tenacious and penetrating.

A Hindoo smoking his hookah, or even plebeian bubble-bubble, can be smelt out from a long distance—as the lurking servant often finds out to his cost.

M. S.

THE harvester Death does not always reap his largest crop of victims from the poor and lowly, if the *St. James' Budget* is to be believed. It says: "The atmosphere of the most miserable den in the East-end of London can hardly be more poisonous than that of many a drawing-room, crammed to suffocation throughout the hours of night and until early morning during the season with what is termed the 'elite' of society. Elderly women and girls of the higher classes die by dozens owing to insufficiency of clothing; yet not a hand is stretched forth to help them, nor a voice raised even from the pulpit in their behalf. The agonies, again, endured by the rich from gout, dyspepsia, enlarged livers, and other ailments caused by an overabundance of food to fine, probably far exceed those that arise from insufficient nourishment and that those unfortunate people die prematurely in large numbers owing to errors of diet is a fact less and disputed. The appointment of a Royal commission to investigate the whole question would lead to startling revelations, and perhaps the comment on gathered would make the poor more contented with their own lot."

HE who knows most grieves most for wasted time.

Nothing is so reliable as Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for colds, coughs in short for all and all derangements of the respiratory organs which tend towards consumption. In ordinary cases it is a certain cure, and it affords sure relief for asthma and consumption, even in advanced stages.

SUNSHINE.

BY C. J.

We called her Sunshine, for her golden hair,
Her dove-gray eyes, her rosy lips, all shone
And gleamed with radiance, as from orb more fair
Than e'en the sun in heaven to look upon.

There was no dark in all her life; her bliss
Was fully bliss, and where her home she made
No shadow fell; for like the sun is this,
Her brightness could not bear to look on shade.

Our hearts turned to her, as till day be gone
To the dear sun the eyes of flowers are given;
She was our sunshine; in her light we shone,
As all our earth glows in the light of heaven.

We know the light was over-great for earth,
Of her pure innocence and guileless love.
Methinks the sun is brighter in yon sky
Since our sweet sunshine dwelleth there above.

OF GREAT AND LITTLE.

CANON WILBERFORCE having come to a certain town to advocate the cause of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, met the Rev. Mr. Hawker.

"Look here," said the Archdeacon. "I have to speak at the meeting at Stratton to-night, and I am told that there is a certain Mr. Knight who will be on the platform, and is a wearisome speaker. I have not much time to spare. Is it possible by a hint to reduce him to reasonable limits?"

Mr. Hawker said it was utterly impossible—he was irrepressible.

"But," he added, "leave him to me, and he will not trouble you."

At the meeting, this Mr. Knight was on the platform, waiting for his chance to rise.

"Ah, Knight," said Mr. Hawker, in a whisper, "the Canon has left his watch behind, and mine is also at home. Will you lend yours for timing the speeches?"

With some hesitation Mr. Knight did so, handing him his gold repeater, with a bunch of seals attached. Presently Mr. Knight rose to speak. Now the latter gentleman was accustomed, when addressing a public audience, to dangle his bunch of seals round in his left hand. Just about the time he began his oration, his hand went instinctively to his fob in quest of the seals. They were not there. He stammered and felt again, floundered in his speech, and, after a few feeble efforts to recover himself, gave in, and sat down.

Mr. Hawker frequently acted as postman for his parishioners, and after service on Sunday a distribution took place on the porch, when he not only delivered, but had also frequently to read the letters.

On one occasion he was reading a letter to an old woman whose son was in Brazil. Part of the letter ran as follows:

"'I cannot tell you, dear mother, how the muskitties torment me. They never leave me alone, but pursue me everywhere ——.'"

"To think of that!" interrupted the old woman. "My Ezekiel must be a handsome lad! But I am interrupting. Go on, please, parson."

"'Indeed, dear mother,'" continued the Vicar, reading, "'I shut my door and windows every evening to keep them out of my room——.'"

"Dear life!" exclaimed the old woman; "what will the world come to next?"

"'And yet,'" went on the Vicar, "'they do not leave me alone. I believe they come down the chimney to get at me.'"

"Well, well, now parson!" exclaimed the mother, holding up her hands. "To think how forward of them!"

"Of whom?"

"Why, the Miss Kitties, sure. When I were young maidens would have blushed to do such a thing. And come down the chimney, too!"

After a short pause, the mother's pride overmastering a sense of what befitted her sex, she broke forth again:

"But Ezekiel must be rare handsome for the maidens to be after him so. And I suppose that the Miss Kitties must be quality folk, too!"

A young and smart-looking Scotch clergyman was preaching in a strange country church. Fearing that his hair was not properly parted in the middle, or perhaps that he might have a spot on his nose, he quietly and significantly said to the janitor, there being no mirror in the vestry:

"John, could you get me a glass?"

John disappeared, and after a few seconds returned with something under his coat, which, to the astonishment of the clergyman, he produced in the form of a lemonade bottle, with a gill of whisky in it, saying:

"Ye manna let on about it, minister, for I got it as a great favor, and I wadna hae got it if I hadna said it was for you."

It may be well to mention that among the humbler orders in Scotland a "glass" is the expression for a dram of liquor. In the foregoing anecdote we are not told whether the minister or John consumed the gill.

Dean Ramsay relates that one of the Earls of Lauderdale was once alarmingly ill, one distressing symptom being a total absence of sleep, without which, the medical men said he could not recover.

His son, who was rather inclined to be simple, and who was playing on the carpet, cried out:

"Send for that preaching man frae Livingstone, for tayther aye sleeps when he's in the pulpit."

One of the doctors thought the hint worth attending to, and the experiment of "getting a minister to him" succeeded, for sleep came, and the Earl recovered.

In contrast to those persons who assiduously attend church, there is a much larger class of persons who can rarely, if ever, be induced to enter a place of worship. There is a story of a village curate who, after much persuasion, had got an old woman of this class to go to church on Good Friday. On his way home he overtook her, and after expressing his pleasure at the success of his exhortation, he spoke to her of the event just commemorated by the Church. On taking leave, she inquired how long it was since that cruel piece of business occurred.

"Nearly two thousand years ago," answered the curate.

"Two thousand years ago!" she exclaimed, with a brightening countenance; "Oh, then let us hope it is not true!"

Grains of Gold.

To a willing mind hard things are easy.

To enjoy to-day, stop worrying about to-morrow.

The life of action is nobler than the life of thought.

The Church is God's angelic messenger to the race.

Think always only of the best, and the good will soon appear.

So long as we live in this world we cannot be without trouble.

Say less than you think, rather than think only half what you say.

Those who are greedy of praise prove that they are poor in merit.

Be sure your ground is good—then be sure you maintain your ground.

Three fourths of civilized humanity cherish their little private idiotries.

The knowledge of courtesy and good manners is a very necessary study.

A person who has no object in life is apt to run a vagrant and useless career.

To abound in all things, and not to know the right use of them, is positive penury.

A man may be great by chance, but never wise or good without taking pains for it.

Comparison, more than reality, makes man happy, and can make them wretched.

For those who have a living faith, there may be bitter sorrows, but there is no despair.

The noblest spirits are those which turn to heaven, not in the hour of sorrow, but in that of joy.

Foolishness rushes into publicity to draw attention, while intelligence keeps in the background to observe.

If you count the sunny and cloudy days of the whole year, you will find that the sunshine predominates.

In proportion as men are real coin, and not counterfeit, they scorn to enjoy credit for what they have not.

Men's minds will either feed upon their own good or others' evil. Who wanteth the one will prey upon the other.

A deep and profound knowledge of ourselves will never fail to curb the emotions we may feel at the foibles of others.

The mind profits by the wreck of every passion, and we may measure our road to wisdom by the sorrows we have undergone.

Faith is the blossom of the soul; it makes the hope of a future life a bright reality, and brings departed friends in speaking distance.

Before a man can be manly, the gifts which make him so must be collected by him slowly, unconsciously, as are his bones, his flesh, and his blood.

The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity there is no such thing as excess.

Our happiness depends less upon the art of pleasing than upon a uniform disposition to please. The difference is that which exists between ceremony and sincerity.

Femininities.

Woman is most perfect when most womanly.

In wishing to extend her empire, woman destroys it.

One way for a woman to keep a secret—To keep it going.

All women are good—good for something or good for nothing.

Handsome women without religion are flowers without perfume.

A woman resembles an army in this, that she is lost if she has no reserve.

Narrow waists and narrow minds, says an impolite Frenchman, go together.

Unhappy is the man for whom his own mother has not made all other mothers venerable.

A woman is always most busily engaged at packing her trunk when the expressman calls for it.

A Boston woman-hater says it takes a ton of coal to keep a ten-cent geranium alive all winter.

A man never so beautifully shows his own strength as when he respects a woman's softness.

Someone has defined love: A little sighing, a little crying, a little dying, and a good deal of lying.

A woman who pretends to laugh at love, is like the child who sings at night when he is afraid.

A woman—Like the heart, hidden, but all the same she is the throbbing life of man's character and destiny.

Dio Lewis says American women need sunshine, and not paint and powder, to improve their complexion.

Quite frightful—Nihilism is not the worst evil of Russia. The women are said to be addicted to china painting.

The wife of a New York millionaire is called "chandelier," from the quantity of diamonds she displays at dinner parties.

Massachusetts girls are looking longingly toward California, where a woman only 25 years old has already had five husbands.

"Yes, my wife is a good player," says a Long Island farmer. And then he adds: "She is also just as handy with her tongue."

This world is pretty even—the piano has spoiled many a good dish-washer, and many a good dish-washer has spoiled a piano.

There are 2,000,000 widows in Germany, it is said. Some of the husbands are in heaven, but the majority are in this country.

"No," she said, "I didn't scream because I was afraid of the cow, but it's the customary thing to do, and one must be in fashion."

A movement is on foot in London to establish a home in New York for English girls who emigrate to America to become domestics.

It is a queer country which permits a woman to wear a straw bonnet in winter, and frowns down the man who wears a straw hat.

Small boy: "Pa, did you know ma long before you married her?" Pa: "I didn't. I didn't know her until after I had married her."

The Turkish woman is marriageable at the age of nine years. In this country girls don't even think of marriage until they get to be over ten.

It is a fact that women's brains are stronger than men's. It is also a fact that an elephant is larger than a mouse, yet he can't catch one.

The true mother rules by the law of kindness, and to her children the word "mother" is synonomous with everything pure, sweet and beautiful.

A lady in Cynthiana, Ky., has a picture of Abraham Lincoln woven in black and white silk, which was made in Lyons, France, at a cost of eight hundred dollars.

A Nebraska widow of thirty-six, who has had twenty-one children, wants another husband. One who has had experience in running an orphan asylum preferred.

A strong-minded young lady said to her dressmaker the other day: "If women are ever allowed to vote, what do you think will be the fashion for voting-dresses?"

There are two classes of unmarried women in society—scrawny old maids, and young white of girls. You learn this by, hearing each of these classes describe the other.

Ah Slab, a Chinaman of rare Mongolian attractions, living in Lafayette, Ind., has been expelled from Chinese society in that city on account of his betrothal to a white girl.

A paper in Mt. Carmel, Mo., records the marriage recently of a gentleman and lady for the third time, though they had never been divorced, and had lived together for seven years.

No girl is plain, says Mr. Ruskin, who is well-bred, kind or modest. All real deformity means want of manners or of heart. All real ugliness means some kind of hardness of heart or vulgarity of education.

Jones asked his wife, "Why is a husband like dough?" He expected she would give it up, and he was going to tell her that it was because a woman needs him; but she said it was because it was hard to get off her hands.

Mrs. Benjamin Terrill, of Smithfield, N. C., who recently left her husband and departed for parts unknown, left a note behind asking Mr. Terrill to "carry her clothes over to her mother's," where she would call if she wanted them.

A gentleman said to one of his friends that for some years his wife had persisted in saying that she was only 29 years old. "Mine is more reasonable," replied his friend. "I have succeeded in making her enter the thirties, but I have failed to make her come out of them."

News Notes.

Vermont has twenty female school superintendents.

There are at least 480,000 molecules in an ant's brain.

Cows are still used to drag the plow in Central Germany.

There are 28 farmers and 40 lawyers in the Ohio Legislature.

Sullivan, the pugilist, spends his money as fast as he makes it.

A Chicago detective has partially reformed and become a bank-robber.

There are, it is reported, 47 postmasters who get but $1 a year salary.

"My Name is Smith," is the title of the coming great English novel.

A New York lady has just received from abroad a cloak costing $20,000.

The girls at Princeton, Ind., have organized an anti-chewing-gum society.

Would the prohibition of tight-lacing be a violation of "freedom of contract?"

The Alaska seal-hunters have killed over 90,000 animals during the present season.

Sophocles' "Electra" is to be played in Greek by English school girls at Cambridge.

A seven year-old-girl, who is said to have "inherited her talent," is lecturing in Texas.

Only one colored man lives in Montgomery, Texas, and he is the porter of a hotel there.

It is said that sparrows and swallows forsake a district if cholera is about to make its appearance.

A Professor Wood tell, us that the much-despised and would-be rejected cockroach has 3,000 teeth.

John Quincy Adams received a salary from the United States Government for sixty-nine years.

A lawyer of Elberton, Ga., took as his fee for a case tried the other day at that place three fat possums.

There is said to be an English Earl who has his life insured for $100,000, partly in American companies.

It is one of the inconsistencies of life that we throw bouquets at the soprano, and bootjacks at the tomcat.

More than three thousand snakes were killed within a mile of Falls City, Neb., during a recent overflow.

Three sisters were recently married in the Second Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., at the same time.

Miss Susan Ryan, of San Francisco, Cal., is fast recovering from the effects of her third attempt at suicide.

It is said that Barnum, Bailey and Hutchinson, the circus men, have divided $1,000,000 as the result of the season.

An exchange figures up that there are in this country nearly 62,000 ministers of various Christian denominations.

Were all the wealth of the United States to be equally divided among its inhabitants, each person would get $1,000.

Milan and Turin are distinguished by their excellent schools, with gymnasiums attached, for deformed children.

Boston's prize cheese is one that is three feet eight inches thick, 5 feet 6 inches in diameter, and 3,232 pounds in weight.

English doctors are talking about the evils of over-education, and urge the abandonment of competitive examinations.

If the area of the United States was as densely settled as that of France, there would be room here for 600,000,000 people.

A Chicago paper is authority for the statement that freckles have become so fashionable that they are now produced artificially.

William and John Jacob Astor, of New York, grandsons of the original John Jacob, are estimated to be worth $50,000,000 each.

The Italians of New York are said to be more economical than even the Chinese. A whole family will subsist on $5 a week, rent excepted.

Two colored boys were matched against a white boy and a dog the other day in Washington, in an "eating bout." The canine team won the wager, $5.

The smallest pony known is the pet of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts-Bartlett. The pony stands only thirteen inches high, and is five years of age.

Gen. Washington and Gen. Sherman, by a curious historical coincidence, issued their farewell orders to the army on the same day a century apart—Nov. 1, 1783-1883.

Chas. B. Finlayson, a 15-year-old lad, of Albany, Ore., murdered his step-mother recently, because he thought she did not treat him well enough. He stabbed her twenty-five times.

A new departure in the Boston public schools was set on foot last week in the order passed by the School Committe to fit up a school for the instruction of boys in the use of tools.

Not many years ago, no lawyer would have thought of showing himself inside the U. S. Supreme Court bar unless clad in the most rigid swallow-tails. Now, however, the black frock is permitted.

IT IS THE BUSINESS OF EVERYONE HAVING A COLD to treat it promptly and properly until it is gotten rid of—intelligent experience fortunately presenting a curative in Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, thoroughly adapted to remove speedily all Coughs and Colds—allay any exciting inflammation of the throat or Lungs, and remove the distressing symptoms of Asthma or Pleurisy.

VERBAL LAPSES.

To err is human, and make verbal lapses is especially human; hence one thoroughly enjoys hearing a faux pas.

These lapses may for the most part be attributed to one or other of four causes—haste, carelessness, innocence and ignorance.

We have heard of the captain of a small ocean steamer—a bluff, hearty sea-dog, of cockney birth — who sometimes caused amusement to his passengers by his slips.

He was in the habit of reading the Church of England service on Sunday morning, and his verbal vagaries were such assertiously to interfere with the devout attention of the passengers.

On one occasion he read the episode of "Juel and Cesares," and prayed that the Queen might be "endowed with eternal fucility."

Ignorant error is not, however, invariably "at sea."

A man of the would-be erudite order, on being accosted by a neighbor with, "What a windy morning!" replied: "Yes, it is blowing a perfect tournament."

The same "derangement of epitaphs" was noticeable in the letter of a country correspondent who wrote: "Here I sit in this quiet sequestrated nook."

There is a story told of a minister who referred in his sermon to the "Sarlsoes and Faduceos;" and in the course of an announcement as to a certain meeting being "held in the hall," he misplaced the vowels in the first and last words, with a result which can only be mildly hinted at as suggestive of Hades.

At a clerical gathering in a certain town in Nova Scotia an aged brother rose and remarked: "We are acquainted with the Scriptural injunction—this day every man is expected to do his duty."

As the meeting dispersed, one of the clergymen spoke to the reverend lapsemaker, and informed him the quotation was from Shakespeare. "Shakespeare!" replied the old minister; "that can't be, for I've never read Shakespeare."

There are occasional slips of the tongue which can be traced only to mental peculiarity, resulting from distorted reasoning, as was exemplified by the young lady who observed: "Isn't it strange that we should get our tortoise-shell combs from an animal that hasn't got a hair on its head?

Villages are proverbial for the development of character, or rather characteristics.

In such small centres peculiarities and eccentricities find a scope and opportunity which are lacking amid the restrictions and larger interests of city life.

A village orator eloquently perorated in a supposed quotation from Keats: "A thing of beauty is a thing for ever?" A registrar of a certain town in Scotland informs us that he was once startled by the statement: "If you please, sir, I've come to registrate the birth of a young woman." In the same locality an Irishwoman, wanting relief from the Parochial Board, said: "I would not tell a lie to that Prodigal Board for anything."

EXPOSURE.—It is a common opinion, says a farmer, that exposure to the sun is injurious to manure, and the opinion is probably well founded. The sun dries the manure—that we know—and removes the moisture from it. This moisture in the manure absorbs whatever ammonia may have been formed by the decomposition of the organic matter, and, of course, the vapor so formed carries off with it the volatile or gaseous ammonia. So that the exposure of manure to the sun with repeated moistening and drying of the manure will in time completely remove all the valuable nitrogen in it, from which the ammonia is derived, and which is the most useful part of the manure.

THE cigarmakers of Cincinnati threaten to strike on account of a demand by the manufacturers that the workmen shall pay for the gas used morning and evening.

WHEN you visit or leave New York City save Baggage Expressage and Carriage Hire, and stop at the GRAND UNION HOTEL, opposite Grand Central Depot.

Six hundred elegant rooms fitted up at a cost of one million dollars. Rooms reduced to $1.00 and upwards per day. European plan. Elevator. Restaurant supplied with the best. Horse cars, stages, and elevated railroad to the depots. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union Hotel than at any other first-class hotel in the city.

Facetiæ.

A sky-light—The sun.

Hard case—The turtle a.

Match safe—The married man.

An undesirable loan—A cyclone.

A rash act—Catching the measles.

Home-bound—A bed-ridden patient.

Writing a wrong is the forger's work.

Always happy to meat friends—Butchers.

Coal men are familiar with the ways that are dark.

Even an armless man can take a hand in a game of a foot-ball.

What is that, the fewer there are to guard it, the safer it is? A secret.

Heart Disease in all its forms cured by Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Price, $1; 6 for $5; by druggists.

"Dar am a hundred seekers after money whar dar is one seeker arter happiness," says old Uncle Rube.

The only remedy for Heart Disease in all its forms is Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Price, $1; 6 for $5.

An Ohio postmistress has resigned to get married. Poor thing! She'll have often to wait for a delayed mail.

Superfluous Hair.

Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 128 West Springfield Street, Boston, Mass.

Hughes Corn and Bunion Plasters

Give instant relief, and effect a cure. (They are not pads to relieve the pressure.) Each 25 cents per box; twelve Corn or six Bunion in each box. Sent by mail on receipt of price. C. C. HUGHES, Druggist, Eighth and Race Sts., Philadelphia, Pa.

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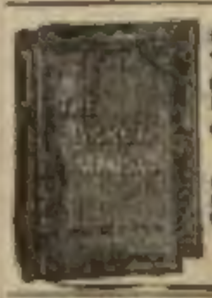

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Urinary and Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes, Dropsy, Stoppage of Water, Incontinence of Urine, Bright's Disease, Albuminuria, and in all cases where there are brick-dust deposits, or the water is thick, cloudy or mixed with substances like the white of an egg, or threads like white silk, or there is a morbid, dark, bilious appearance and white bone-dust deposits, and where there is a pricking, burning sensation when passing water, and pain in the small of the back and along the loins.

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Looseness, Diarrhœa, or painful discharges from the bowels are stopped in fifteen or twenty minutes by taking Radway's Ready Relief. No congestion or inflammation, no weakness or lassitude, will follow the use of the R. R. Relief.

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For headache, whether sick or nervous, toothache, neuralgia, nervousness and sleeplessness, rheumatism, lumbago, pains and weakness in the back, spine, or kidneys; pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints, pains in the bowels, heartburn and pains of all kinds, Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure. Price, 50 cents.

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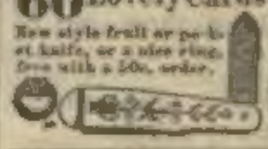

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THE HOUR-GLASS.

CUTHBERT BEDE, in "Notes and Queries," says: I have read, though I cannot say where, that hour-glasses were invented in Alexandria in the third century but they do not appear to have been used in English churches until twelve centuries after that date.

An earlier date than that mentioned by Mr. North is 1569, in the frontispiece to the Bishops' Bible, where Archbishop Parker is seen with the pulpit-glass beside him; but five years before that one had been affixed in St. Katherine's Church, Aldgate. The hour-glass occupies a conspicuous position in Doo's well-known engraving from Wilkie's picture of "John Knox preaching before the Lords of the Congregation in St. Andrews, 1559."

Probably the artist had some authority for this introduction of the pulpit-glass. In Brand's "History of Newcastle-upon-Tyne" mention is made of "one half-houre glasse" in the inventory taken in 1632 of the goods of All Saints' Church; but we are not informed whether or not this glass was turned up to complete the sixty minute measure.

When the Chapel Royal, Savoy, was restored in 1857, an eighteen-minute pulpit glass was placed in the church and some of the newspapers of the day regarded this as the Queen's protest against lengthy sermons.

It was Daniel Burgess, the celebrated Nonconformist divine, who, when preaching against the sin of drunkenness, turned up the hour-glass at the end of sixty minutes, and, with the remark, "Another glass—and then!" set its sands again running and continued his sermon.

An adaptation of this pulpit joke was made by the Scotch minister who, having been compelled by the Earl of Airlie to join in a Saturday night's carouse, retaliated the next morning by preaching at him a long sermon from the text, "The wicked shall be punished, and right *airlie*;" and after an hour's diatribe, turned up the glass and, quoting his lordship's oft-repeated command of the previous night said, "Another glass—and then!" and pursued his discourse.

Sir Joseph Jekyl says that when Bishop Burnet was preaching against Popery, at the Rolls Chapel, in the first year of James II., the sand in his hour-glass ran out; upon which he held it up, turned it round, and set it running again, continuing his sermon for another hour to the great delight of the congregation, "who almost shouted for joy."

A somewhat similar anecdote is told in Parr's "Life of Usher" of the good archbishop when he was seventy-five years of age, and was preaching before the Countess of Peterborough and "some other persons of quality" at St. Martin's Church. The pulpit hour-glass is shown in Hogarth's "Sleeping Congregation."

Dr. Rogers in his "Familiar Illustrations of Scottish Character" quotes the Rev. Peter Glas, minister of Crail, as saying, "It was a puir parish that didna hae a sand-glass." Both George Herbert and Hooker mention an hour as the proper length for a sermon.

Chambers in the "Book of Days," vol. II, p. 713, says that the custom of having hour-glasses in the pulpit, "seems to have been chiefly introduced after the Reformation when long sermons came much into fashion."

THE Multiplication Table.—The registry of births.

PET NAMES.—Far from disliking pet names in the nursery or in the retirement of the family, they seem to us very fit and beautiful there, but there they should be kept. Outside acquaintances have no right to call a young girl Sis, or Pussy, or Birdie, or Pearl, or any other pretty or affectionate name which may be given her by her father and mother, brothers and sisters. Wives, too, seem lacking in the reverence which all true women and high-bred ladies show to their lords, when they speak of them in society as Ned, Tom or Dick. Nor does a husband pay his wife the honor which every gentleman should, when he alludes to her in a room full of strangers or acquaintances as Polly or Fan. It is very much better to be found too formal than too free and easy; and society is the gainer wherever people are on their guard about these seeming trifles.

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Lardy Dah!
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5	U. S. Greenbacks of $20 each	100	200 Beautiful Oil Pictures, 50c each	100
10	" " " $10 "	100	300 Sets (six in set) Silver Tea Spoons, at $1.00	300
10	" " " $5 "	50	500 Largest Silver Plated Butter Knives, 50c each	250
200	" " " $1 "	200	300 " " " Sugar Spoons, " "	150
1	Elegant Square Grand Piano	350	10 Sets Silver Table Knives, $10.00	100
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1	Elegant Suit Parlor Furniture	100	20 Elegant Gold Plated 6-shot Revolvers, $5 each	100
1	Elegant Silver Plated Tea Set	75	10 Opera Glasses at $10 each	100
1	Sewing Machine	60	200 Cloth-bound Dictionaries, at $1.00 each	200
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4	Gents' Solid Gold Watches, $50 each	200	100 Gents' Vest " " " $1.00 "	100
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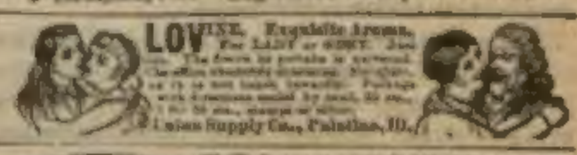

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50 Large size all Gold, Silver and Motto Cards, with name, 10c. 12 pks. and handsomest Rolled Gold Seal Ring $1. 5 pks. and ring, 50c. Agents' large Sample Album 25c. Do not compare our Golden Beauties with Geobeys 75c & $1 pack advertised. ALLING BROS., Northford, Conn.

50 Elegant Imp. Chrome Cards, name in new script type only 10c. 12 pks $1, or 30 pks. for $2 and choice free of handsome gold ring, plain, chased, fancy, stone setting, or tortoise 2-blade knife. Snow & Co, Meriden Ct

50 New Enameled Chrome Cards for 1884, name on, 10c. Prize with 2 p'ks. Potter & Co. Montowese, Ct.

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

AT present for out-door wear there are very chic-looking cloth redingotes, closely fitted in the back, which fall away in loose fronts, faced with ottoman or satin, and show a vest of the same satin or ottoman, and sometimes of cloth, underneath.

This vest is not very long. Below it a narrow strip of the front of the dress shows a modification of this idea, and one which suits a slender figure especially well has a vest of cloth and loose fronts faced with satin, which, however, are drawn together by a ribbon that, starting from the back seams, ties in a loose knot in front.

The polisses, or shirred redingotes, if one may so describe them, which are worn in Paris, have had little favor here. Yet with their gauged fronts and closely fitting gauged backs, and their belts of ribbon, they are becoming to slight figures, and worn in moderation would be a relief from the plain redingote.

The Newmarkets, with a hood lined with bright-colored satin—perhaps a broad, shallow one, which extends from the shoulder to shoulder, and looks somewhat like a soldier's knapsack—form the one departure we see upon our streets from the unadulterated redingote.

But it is too little a favor altogether to be thankful for. As a traveling coat, a young girl's school coat or a rainy weather garment it is excellent; in any other capacity we would easily dispense with it.

Cloth ragians come next in popularity after redingotes and Newmarkets. They almost conceal the costume, are held in to the waist in the back, often looped in loose folds like an overdress behind, and have wide sleeves, trimmed with a broad box-plaiting.

Loops of ribbon are occasionally set upon the back drapery and on the front, or metal clasps take their place.

The dark cloth colors affected for redingote are chiefly reproduced in ragians, but the imported specimens show frequent deviations from black, invisible green, deep-set blue and darkest brown.

Lighter shades of these colors appear; various tints of wine color, from the deep fashionable dahlia to a rich garnet; and the newest thing in this line consists of brocaded ragians in colored figured woolen goods and cloths, which have often quite a gay aspect, but as yet have not been adopted to any great extent.

One such model is of old red with figures of dead yellowish gold, the whole having the faded, harmonious effect of old tapestry.

Another model is of "bleu marine," brocaded in dull red figures; the back is of the princesse shape, tight fitting and liberally draped.

The front is as snug as a dress waist to the dark blue waist belt; below that it falls nearly to the bottom of the skirt like a full polonaise.

The sleeves, cut in one with the back, are faced and bordered with deep blue velvet and loose to the shoulders in front to give the effect of a cape.

At the neck is a pointed trimming of velvet, descending on the bust. But this sort of ragian or polisse, as we have said, is not much seen.

A handsome, inconspicuous bonnet of black velvet has three black tips set on the front in the same way, and oblong jet beads framed in a rim of smaller jet bugles placed diagonally at intervals against the brim.

A French capote of mulse-colored crepon shirred over the crown has a fluted brim of deep blue velvet, a rouleau of the same, strings to match, and a fancy breast with a great deal of yellow set on the left side toward the front.

The generality of women, with that deplorable mania for copying every one else which produces such tiresome results, prefer the strictly conventional type. This great conventional type, which is so powerful, also has numerous worshippers in the wearers of tailor-made suits.

Here, to be sure, one cannot with justice complain of the prevailing sameness. For it is difficult to introduce such variety in a style of dress whose chief characteristics, the ones, indeed, upon which the whole success of the style depends, are simplicity severity and "mannishness."

Still one might do something. Cloth suits need not all, without exception, be made with kilt skirts, long, flat English overdresses, and nondescript jackets and basques. Minor points of difference may be introduced quite well.

The French cloth suits have braiding as a trimming, or applications of plush and velvet flowers, or have skirts of dark satin with large velvet figures, while the tunic and basque are of plain cloth.

One iron-gray cloth suit has a mantle with a pointed hood; gray cords hold the drapery of the skirt on the left. A deep brown cloth is combined with moss green satin brocaded in brown velvet flowers and leaves; the redingote of brown cloth, which is worn outside it, is lined with moss-green plush and falls open from the throat.

A deep myrtle-green cloth suit is made with a plain underskirt, brocaded at intervals with a large plush rose; the long, slightly draped overdress is of plain cloth; the basque, of plain plush with heavy cord brandebourgs.

If something perfectly plain is wanted, it is just as easy to introduce some little note of originality. We have seen one black tricot—this style of cloth is especially fashionable just now—with a long, straight tunic slashed up the left side and caught across with black cords.

The alpaca foundation skirt had a pleated flounce three-eighths of a yard in depth. The coat was tight fitting and reached to the knees.

It had a vest lot in the front, across which were rows of cording. A black astrakhan collar, a muff the same, and a capote bonnet of cloth with a border of astrakhan on short velvet strings and three tips on the front, finished the costume, which, simple as it was, stood out from among the conventional cloth suits surrounding it. We freely confess that it is a delight to us when, in a crowd, our eyes rest upon the attire of a woman who self-evidently has had some individual idea about her own clothes and has seen that it was carried out.

This is what makes the truly well-dressed woman, not slavish subserviency to fashion whether it presents itself in the person of a M. Worth or the combined persons of all her friends and acquaintances and of every other woman upon the street.

Every one has not the true intuition concerning attire with which some women are gifted.

To many poor creatures the getting of a new outfit is a matter of dreadful trouble and perplexity. All they can do is to put themselves into the hands of a good dressmaker and abide by her decision. But plenty of other women who know quite well "what is what" dress just as conventionally, from the absurd notion that they must be strictly "in the fashion."

That unfortunate expression! If "being in the fashion" must necessarily be synonymous with dressing like nine-tenths of the women in town in every point and particular, then should we say it were better to be "out of fashion?"

No. The really clever and the really elegantly dressed woman, is the one who uses this great autocrat—La Mode—as a medium for the expression of her own individuality; who accepts its varying phases, because under those various aspects her own style appears in constantly new lights, and is ever fresh and charming in consequence; who takes upon herself very calmly to modify its tendencies in her own person if she sees good, and who, while following its lead, reaping all its benefits and escaping singularity, which should always be the aim of every woman of refinement, never allows herself to be ruled by it for one instant.

For evening dresses this winter there will be a special fancy for white and pale tinted tulles embroidered in flowers and leaves in the same hues, and thrown over satin or silk to match.

The train of toilets of this sort, and trains this winter are not to be as long as they have been—one yard and three-quarters from the waist being about the longest—are to be trimmed with a large pinked ruche of the faille or ottoman, or satin mixed with white lace.

The pointed corsage will be of the plain material, trimmed in front with a bouffant plastron or "gilet" of embroidered tulle, like that upon the front of the skirt. Evening dresses made dancing length, as very many are to be made this winter, can be fashioned upon this same idea.

The correct way to make the waists of evening toilets now is decidedly to cut them in a low round, old-fashioned "decollete," the outlines of which are softened by a bertha.

Fireside Chat.

ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

THERE are fashions in weddings as in dress. Some years ago was supposed to be the English style was introduced.

The popularity of this style lies in the absence of bridesmaids, the presence of a best man, and the substitution of ushers for groomsmen.

The best man follows the groom from the vestry and holds the groom's hat during the ceremony.

But, after all, this does not seem to be the genuine English style. It is rather a sort of compromise, for mild Anglo-maniacs, between the British and the American method.

The true through-and-through English style requires, besides a best man and ushers, that the bride shall walk up the aisle ungloved, holding a family prayer book.

As the Anglo-maniac is an imitation, an imitation prayer book will probably do for ladies whose families don't use a prayer book.

An invention in weddings which has, however, nothing especial to do with the English or American style, is to strew the middle aisle of the church with autumn leaves.

This picturesque feature was introduced at a recent wedding in New Jersey, the rustling leaves accompanying the soft wedding music as the bridal party approached the altar.

But the most startling novelty was recently tried at a wedding in Sing Sing. As a rival to the groom's best man the bride had a "best girl."

The "best girl" solves the problem what to do with the best man after the ceremony as he has the best girl to escort down the aisle. For this reason the new feature may become popular.

It is now not uncommon to have young girls in Kate Greenaway costume to attend at the altar during the ceremony.

FURS.—Every lady knows the difficulty of selecting furs; practice only can make any one a competent judge of price and quality, for there are such infinite varieties in almost all kinds that it is necessary to be familiar with them all.

Large, heavy muffs are no longer fashionable. Costumes are usually matched in brocaded silk or velvet, from which muffs are made and trimmed with fur, so that a lady of fashion nowadays may possess one for every suit she wears.

Shoulder capes are to be had in every variety, seal and beaver being the most sought after.

As for the price it varies from a few dollars up to a few hundred, and there is no reason why any one should shiver for want of fur, so many cheap kinds are now to be seen at the stores. Children's cloaks this winter are to be generally fur-trimmed, but as yet fur-lined garments are exclusively made for adults.

In the extreme north of Germany and in Russia hoods trimmed and lined with fur are universally worn by children, and a mitigated form of the same fashion is seen here in the fur-eared caps worn by the boys.

One very singular fact appears inseparable from the wearing of the furs, and that is the difficulty people who have once worn them find in giving them up, even when warmth of climate makes them superfluous.

Russians visiting the baths of Southern Germany will wear as many as if they were twenty miles north of Moscow, and nothing will be seen of them but their noses, and an illustration of the same peculiarity is evident every spring, when elderly ladies who have worn fur tippets all the winter cannot be induced to lay them aside, even when the April sun gives them a foretaste of midsummer. Such creatures of habit are we all!

DECORATING.—A shabby frame to a chimney-glass may be easily improved by covering it with cretonne in a close puffing. Choose the color to match the curtains or furniture slips, or to make a pretty contrast with the wall.

Instead of the ordinary roller-shades for the sitting-room little curtains of delicate soft material, such as white muslin, Tussore silk or Madras muslin, to run with tiny rings sewn on, on slim brass rods, are becoming more and more popular.

These little curtains should divide in the middle, allowing of partial or entire withdrawal, when a perfectly unobstructed space, smaller or larger, would be left for airiness.

Fine Holland makes very pretty curtains and offers fair opportunity for effective embroidery. The simplest style of outline embroidery, such as a row of stiff paisles, slight and slim, yellow and white, with green leaves outspread, placed along the lower hem of each little curtain, looks well.

Madras muslin, being faintly colored and patterned, needs no embroidery. Madras muslin is also used for the broad centre stripe down the middle of a dinner table. In the hand its colors do not fully show, but they come out finely against the white back-ground of the cloth.

To frame etchings a light wood moulding is effective, painted white and adorned with two lines tinted dark gray, the whole frame being not more than an inch in width. This is cheap and simple, but better for the display than a more expensive framing.

THE BEES.—All that can be done for the protection of the bees through the winter should be done at once. If you are not able to do anything else put straw or set corn fodder around the hive to keep off the wind leaving an entrance for the bees.

Correspondence.

P. E.—The firm is first-class.

DOLLY.—You should investigate the matter.

ALEX.—We advise you to refuse the offer.

MARY R.—Such a proceeding would be very wrong. We advise you to write to the party.

SAMSON.—Frequent and loud laughter in company, if not the result of a weak capacity, invariably indicates an indifferent education.

MRS. K. M.—You can get a cheap book which will tell you all about painting on china, etc., by writing to Jaueksky & Co., dealers in Artists' Materials, Phila., Pa.

SNOWDROP.—You may be acting in good faith, but to carry on such a correspondence is decidedly wrong, and calculated to raise a feeling of jealousy in the mind of your lover.

FAERIE. — Ben Jonson declared that Edward Spenser, the English poet, died through want, in King Street, Westminster. He was buried at his own request near Chaucer, in Westminster Abbey.

P. B.—There is no significance whatever to be attached to such an enclosure. Sometimes a piece of blank paper is placed in the envelope with a letter to prevent the reading of the letter through the envelope.

VICTOR.—The story of Cupid and Psyche is an allegory, meaning that castles in the air are exquisite till we look at them as realities, when they instantly vanish and leave only disappointment and vexation behind.

AMY.—The tendency to suicide appears to be much more frequent among men than among women. There is also sufficient reason to believe that in a married state the disposition to suicide is less than in single life.

ROSE. — Standards are those trees or shrubs which stand ringly, without being attached to any wall or support. In gardening and planting they are distinguished into three kinds, the full standard, the half standard, and the dwarf standard.

SWEET FIFTEEN.—A young lady of fifteen should wait at least a few years before engaging herself to anyone. A difference in age of fifteen years is a real objection to a match, but if the parties really love each other it is not an insuperable one.

VANITY. — The Scavenger's Daughter was an instrument of torture invented by William Skevington, lieutenant of the Tower of London, in the reign of Henry VIII. When a prisoner was operated on he was said to "Kiss the Scavenger's Daughter."

HOUSEWIFE.—Polished iron-work may be preserved from rust by a mixture, not very expensive, consisting of copal varnish mixed with as much olive oil as will give it a degree of greasiness, adding thereto nearly as much spirit of turpentine as of varnish.

B. B.—The phrase "Land o' Cakes" was first applied to Scotland by Burns in his poems "Captain Grose's Peregrinations," which commences—

"Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groat's."

TACONY.—There is nothing we know of that will permanently curl the hair. Wrapping around hot pokers and other dangerous processes may render it so for a time, but it soon returns to its natural state. You had better leave it as it is. Plucking out with tweezers is the only method we can safely recommend.

ST. GEORGE.—The story is that Joan, Countess of Salisbury, while dancing with Edward III., let fall her garter, and the gallant monarch perceiving a smile on the face of the courtiers, picked it up and bound it round his own knee, exclaiming, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" "Evil be to him who evil thinks."

VICTIM.—The best cure for corns that we know of is always to wear easy boots. We have but one left out of half a dozen, and we tried almost every remedy without effect until we adopted the one we speak of. We expect that the one left is to remind us occasionally that life without a little pain is an impossibility.

S. S.—It was the girl's duty to at least answer your note. By not doing so she wished probably to show you in her own way she wanted nothing to do with you. The only course left for you is to make the best of it. There are plenty of girls no doubt as good, who would take extreme pleasure not only in receiving but answering such a letter.

P. W. L.—West Point cadets are appointed by the President and members of Congress. A candidate for admission must be proficient in the studies taught in the grammar schools, such as orthography, arithmetic, grammar, geography and history. His pay is $240 per annum, from which is deducted the cost of his board, clothing, books, stationary, etc.

S. S. N.—Have you no aunts or other relatives, or any wise and motherly friends, to whom you could go for advice? Your case is one which requires prudence and deliberation. Do not act hastily. If you have any friends who are living at a distance from your place of residence, to whom you could make a prolonged visit, perhaps it would be wise for you to go and see them.

POSTER.—A treaty of extradition is an agreement being our State and another which criminals of certain classes are surrendered to the State or country to which they belong, with a view to trial and punishment. Treaties of extradition exist between the United States and Great Britian, France, Prussia, Austria, etc., for the mutual surrender of persons charged with murder, forgery, arson and embezzlement.

MINNIE G.—1. Your position of disappointment to a great extent excuses the badness of your poetry, which, intended to be serious, reads most comically. As an instance, we give the last two lines of the second verse—

"And oh! I think my heart is breaking,
Breaking for the love of my pet."

We trust that your pet will return to reward your constancy. 2. The word should be pronounced as it is spelled.